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ABSTRACT

In this manual, both methodological and practical guidelines for conducting field research in urban desegregated schools are discussed. Strategies for negotiating access to and studying all participants in the educational system (students, teachers, administrators, other personnel, and parents) are suggested. Fieldwork styles, philosophies, and techniques are described, and project administration (team work, budgeting, personnel handling) are discussed. Recommendations are made concerning how to deal with ethical, political and practical problems which may arise. Six appendices provide sample questionaires and a network analysis chart appropriate to this type of field research. (WI)

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A Fieldwork Manual for
Studying Desegregated Schools

Joan Cassell, Center for Policy Research, New York

September 1978

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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Department of Health, Education, and Welfare
Joseph A. Califano, Jr., Secretary
Mary F. Berry, Assistant Secretary for Education

National Institute of Education
Patricia Albjerg Graham, Director

Educational Policy and Organization
Marc S. Tucker, Associate Director

Desegregation Studies Team
Ronald D. Henderson, Team Leader

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Table of Contents

Introduction, Murray L. Wax, 1

Fieldwork Manual, Joan Cassell

1. Ethnographic Research, 3

2. Schools and Fieldworkers, 5

3. Selecting a School for Study, 7

Difficulty of entrée, 7
Access strategies, 7
Adverse publicity, 8
Studying "magnet" schools, 8
School system studying itself, 9
Moving in from the community, 9
Studying a changing student body, 9

4. Studying Students, 11

Participant observation, 11
Becoming "part of the scenery," 12
Formal observations, 12
Interviews, 12
Obtaining consent for studying students, 13
Using photographs, 13
Sociometric measures, 13
Mapping seating patterns, 14
Network analysis, 14
"A day in the life of. . . ," 14
Enrolling in a class, 14
Observing outside the school, 14
Following the students home, 14
Explaining the presence of the fieldworker, 15
Taking, hiding and commissioning field notes, 15

5. Studying Teachers, 17

Selecting teachers for study, 17
Obtaining permission, 17

The fieldworker as listener, 17
Taking field notes in front of teachers, 18
Additional techniques for studying teachers, 18
Reciprocity, 18
Observing rule-breaking, 19
Research in factionalized situations, 19
Hiding the values of the researcher, 20
Controlling for researcher bias, 21
Changing attitudes, 21

6. Studying the School Administration, 23

Negotiating access, 23
Informal observation and interaction, 23
The principal as mentor, 23
Studying the principal, 24
Size and composition of the school administration, 24
What do administrators want researchers to learn? 24

7. Strategic Decisions, 27

Allocating resources, 27
Going "up" versus going "out," 27
Depth versus breadth, 27

8. Studying Parents, 29

9. Other School Personnel, 31

10. Studying "Up", 33

11. Strategies, Styles and Philosophies of Fieldwork, 35

How do researchers describe their study? 36
Open versus covert field notes, 37
Non-reactive versus interactive research, 37
Scientific models, 38

12. Working As A Team, 41

Advantages of team research, 41

13. Who Was the Boss? 43

Disadvantages of team research, 43
Complementarity of roles, 43
The ideal research team, 44

14. Do You Have to Be One to Study One? 45

15. Data Collection, Coding and Analysis, 49

Collecting and recording data, 49
Types of data, 49
Quantitative versus qualitative data, 50
Coding and analyzing data, 50

16. Writing a Report, 53

17. Running a Project, 55

18. The Budget, 57

Writing a grant budget, 57
Following a budget, 58

19. Project Personnel, 59

Hiring fieldworkers, 59
Hiring secretaries, 60

20. Administering a Project, 63

21. Advice to Researchers, 65

22. Relationship with the Sponsor, 67

Original proposal, 67
Relationship with projects officers [illegible]7
Advice to a government officer, 68

23. Ethical, Political and Practical Problems, 69

24. Deception, 71

25. Other Problems, 73

Ticklish situations, 73
Broken promises, 74
Political squeeze, 74

26. Confidentiality, 77

27. Feedback of Research Results, 79

28. Are Desegregated Schools Different? 83

29. New Research, 85

Appendix, 87

Appendix A, 87
Appendix B, 93
Appendix C, 95
Appendix D, 97
Appendix E, 101
Appendix F, 103

References Cited, 107

Introduction to Bibliography, Murray L. Wax, 109

Bibliography, 113

Introduction

By Murray L. Wax

Practical, detailed, helpful, frank, unpretentious—those words characterize the accompanying manual on the conduct of fieldwork in urban desegregated schools. Cassell has interviewed fieldworkers who have been working in these schools, and through her text they explain what they have done, the problems they have encountered, and how they have coped. Their projects have involved numerous participants, months of effort, considerable expenditures, and adroit maneuvering amidst a number of organizational bureaucracies. Her respondents are experienced practitioners of fieldwork who have successfully performed difficult feats of investigation. Accordingly her text can be used as a guide by those who contemplate doing fieldwork in schools, by funding officers who might commission such research, by critics reviewing research reports, and—indeed—by a variety of other persons: those interested in urban ethnography, those who are students of modern society, and those who contemplate any sort of intelligent reform involving schools.

Too often, research texts present methodological ideals and ideologies, rather than the actualities needed by the novice or stranger. By reading their exhortations, the novice gains little preparation for the actualities of research investigation and may indeed be mis-prepared because of imagining that experienced researchers really are able to operate "by the book." In Cassell's manuscript there is no such shadowplay, for in her interviews, she and her respondents focused on what had actually occurred, rather than on what might have been ideal.

Especially in governmental circles, there is a serious need for this kind of text, because more and more agencies have seen the utility of ethnography in supplying information pertinent to policy decisions and so have been commissioning projects of fieldwork. Unhappily, the bureaucratic and budgetary models for conventional experimental and survey research fit but poorly on ethnographic projects, and the consequence has been a waste of resource and funds, and in at least one major case a serious threat to the ethical integrity of the research enterprise. While Cassell's text will not answer all questions about all varieties of ethnography, it will provide an increase in understanding so that adaptations in regulations can be made sufficiently early to avoid the most egregious mishaps.

* * * * *

From the educational research literature of the past half-century, a small number of studies remain notable, standing as classics for subsequent scholars. Disproportionately among these are ethnographic accounts, including those of Willard Waller, Robert J. Havighurst, August B. Hollingshead, Jules Henry, Allison Davis and John Dollard. If we bear in mind how small a fraction of the total expenditure on educational research was devoted to ethnography, the quality and significance of this set of works should provoke thought and lead us to doubt the simplistic identification of research quality with quantification.

Educational research has suffered from a confusion among research techniques, methodologies, and the truth quality of investigations. Quantification—including the use of tests of statistical significance—has nothing whatsoever to do with whether or not a research investigation is either true or relevant. Numbers can be helpful—even very helpful—but their presence (as in astrology) does not signify that science is being practiced, and their absence (as in much ethnography) does not mean that research is unscientific. Again, fixed schedules, or instruments, such as paper-and-pencil tests, or structured interview schedules, are not an index of science; under the right circumstances they can generate a useful precision, but the circumstances are often difficult to achieve. Worse yet, it is sometimes hard, either for the researcher or for the critics of

the research, to be certain about the nature of the circumstances of that kind of research and whether its implicit requirements have been fulfilled. For example, many paper-and-pencil tests, such as I.Q. measurements, depend upon the subject adopting a certain mental stance, in which the items are taken seriously and there is motive to proceed apace. But, in mass testing, it is hard to know whether or not those conditions exist. In consequence, a reader may encounter research reports that seem scientific in their usage of techniques, but are basically *un*empirical, because they are not in correspondence with the realities of existence. It is because ethnography brings the researcher—and subsequently the reader—into intimate contact with the daily actualities of school that it is so valuable both for policy in the present and for historical comprehension of the past.

Of the early ethnographies that are here pertinent, most did not focus concentratedly upon the school, but rather upon the interrelationship of school and community. Investigators (notably Davis and Dollard; Havighurst; Hollingshead; Warner and associates; Wax, Wax and Dumont) were concerned to show how the divisions of class, caste (social-race), and ethnicity were reflected from the larger community into the organization of the schools. Repeatedly, their findings were to find confirmation from a variety of other studies, both ethnographic studies of community (e.g. Vidich and Bensman; Ogbu; Seeley; Withers) and studies that utilized paper-and-pencil instruments (e.g. Havighurst and Fuchs; Coleman; Stinchcombe). Through this diversity of techniques, methods, and orientations, the ethnographic findings were enriched and made more precise, yet never challenged.

Subsequent generations of educational field-workers have focused more sharply and more concentratedly upon interaction within the classrooms. The lessons of the community-studies have been accepted, and the research has asked how class, caste (social race), and ethnicity have affected the interaction between teachers and pupils and the ways that—and the subjects or skills which—the pupils choose to learn. Here there has been a series of helpful studies, including those by Eddy, Fuchs, Henry, Leacock, Moore, Rist, and Friedenberg.

The ethnographic studies from which Cassell derives this manual were both broader and richer. Until the past decade, there were but a small handful of studies which focused ethnographicaiiy on a single school for a period of time longer than a year or which used research teams of significant sizes. It is only within this decade that there has been a National Institute of Education able to underwrite contracts of a sufficient magnitude and for a length of time reasonably in congruence with that needed for thorough ethnography. In consequence, the studies here in question are much broader than the earlier ones to which I have referred. Correspondingly, the studies here are able to go beyond the classroom and consider the school as a social organism. These research teams observed, not only classrooms, but hallways, stairways, toilet rooms, playgrounds, and even those areas adjacent to the school building, where students congregate and play. In addition, the teams were concerned with the political and economic life of the cities in which the schools were embedded and the interrelationship between school and civic politics. The richness of data collected by these teams has been so great as to constitute problems, not only in the matter of storage and retrieval, but for analysis and interpretation, and—not least—for issues of confidentiality and privacy of those persons who allowed themselves and their institutions to be studied. Accordingly, the manual by Cassell touches upon a number of methodological and ethical issues which have not usually been considered part of the province of the ethnographic researcher.

The text is novel, simply written, and insightful. While the chapters interrelate, the text can be read out of order and yet with profit. References and academic jargon have been eschewed. But for those who do need bibliography, Kipnis and I have attempted to supply a small collection of the most significant items.

Major works by the authors cited in this "Introduction" will be found in the Bibliography, compiled by Lynne Kipnis and Murray L. Wax, and attached to the Manual by Joan Cassell. This procedure obviates the need to have a separate bibliography (or listing of "References Cited") attached to this "Introduction."

A Fieldwork Manual for

Studying Desegregated Schools

By Joan Cassell

1. Ethnographic Research

Fieldwork is a basic research method used by many anthropologists, some sociologists and a few social psychologists. Sometimes called "participant observation," "ethnography," or "qualitative methodology," it is often supplemented by more quantitative techniques.

Fieldwork differs in many significant respects from other varieties of social research. Rather than seeking to *measure* and *predict*, its primary aim is to *understand* the phenomena of the social world. It is open-ended: the researcher goes into the field to examine the situation rather than clearly defining and delimiting all the relevant variables ahead of time. This method is frequently more time consuming than a purely quantitative study, since the researcher cannot specify in advance the exact nature of the phenomena which will be examined, analyzed and compared. The investigator does not enter the field with preplanned, and possibly arbitrary, measures and criteria; instead, the research is guided by the unfolding events in the field. As a result, fieldwork is extremely flexible, it can discover the unexpected and adapt to unforeseen and rapidly changing circumstances; it is not particularly parsimonious, however, since the research route has not been precisely mapped in advance.

This manual is designed for those who wish to carry out ethnographic research in urban schools, especially desegregated, integrated and-or multiethnic schools. It is also directed at those who commission, design and direct such research. Fieldwork is frequently misunderstood, by social scientists and government and foundation officials having no experience with it, who tend to apply to fieldwork the expectations and requirements of quantitative research; I hope that this report will shed some light upon the techniques and potentialities of ethnographic research.

Because I am writing a how-to-do manual rather than a theoretical treatise, I will give relatively few technical citations. I shall assume that those who intend to do fieldwork have a firm theoretical grounding in their own particular disciplines, and in the relevant ethnographic and educational literature, some of which is cited in my bibliography. Administrators preparing to supervise ethnographic projects can browse through the bibliography and then read whatever articles and books seem particularly appropriate to their concerns.

2. Schools and Fieldworkers

This manual is based in large part upon the experiences of six teams of researchers, who carried out fieldwork in urban desegregated schools in the United States; without the cooperation and advice of members of their staffs it could not have been written. Their researches were carried out under the Field Studies in Urban Desegregated Schools Program of the National Institute of Education, with the research contracts running from August 1975 through December 1977. Four teams carried out fieldwork for two full school years; one team had already been studying a school for three years before this project began, and by now adding two more years had come to have five years of research; and one team continued research for an additional year, so that their school was investigated for three years. The schools which must remain anonymous, to protect the privacy of those studied, were located in urban areas of the Eastern seaboard, the Southeast, South Central, North Central, the Great Lakes and the Western seaboard. They included elementary, middle and high schools, with student populations ranging from approximately 500 to 4500. The ethnic and racial mixes in the various schools included students who were classified as black, oriental, hispanic, white and "other."

The ethnographic research teams were as varied as the schools they studied: one, headed by an anthropologist, included graduate students in anthropology, education and educational administration; another consisted of two sociologists assisted by a sociology graduate student and a number of undergraduates; one, headed by a social psychologist, included graduate students in social psychology and sociology; a team composed of two anthropologists was assisted by anthropology graduate students; and one was headed by a sociologist of education, with assistants trained in education and community organization. The majority of investigators were affiliated with and taught in universities; one headed a university educational research institute; one worked for the public school system in the study city; and one worked for an educational research laboratory.

This report will focus on the actual discoveries, decisions, strategies and advice of the six teams in the field. It is hoped that the reality of their experiences can help guide others who contemplate research in desegregated schools. By concentrating on actual experiences, it is hoped that the reader will get some idea of the people, problems and behaviors that will be encountered in the field. My material will be extremely specific, outlining a variety of details and dilemmas which, it is hoped, will approximate some of the situations found by new researchers. Despite the specificity, names will be omitted and details will be altered and shifted, including on occasion the age and gender of the investigator. This is, in fact, the strategy followed by the research teams, who in their reports changed relatively unimportant details so that they could present significant information while guarding the confidentiality of those who were interviewed and observed. On occasion, I will be citing passages from the reports or papers produced by those research teams. Given the concern of the authors that the research sites not be identified publicly, nor the identities of respondents revealed, I have reluctantly decided to violate the traditional practice of crediting the sources of these quotations, lest I present information that could breach the wall of confidentiality. I know that the members of the various research teams will favor this restriction of information. It goes without saying that I am grateful to those individuals who gave so generously to me of their time and ideas and who were so patient with my requests for their assistance in assembling the data for this report. It also goes without saying that the interpretations and explanations of this report are exclusively mine. The members of the various research teams are not responsible for the ways in which I have interpreted their experiences.

3. Selecting a School for Study

Schools are chosen for study in different ways, for different methodological and theoretical reasons. When the choice is guided by an official Request For a Proposal, certain characteristics of the school are specified in advance, such as whether the area is urban or rural, and the size of the population served.

One school studied under the Urban Desegregated Schools program had been selected for an earlier comparative study of the social organization of three schools. It seemed appropriate for the desegregation study because it was an inner city school with a culturally diverse population. Unlike many "desegregated" schools, which were all-white until black students were brought in, this school had been multi-ethnic for many years. The researchers believed that this school gave them an excellent opportunity to study a number of different minorities, with differing performances and adaptation to schools. The principal was approached—through an outside contact who knew the school, the district and the principal—and the researchers asked if they could come in to study the school. In exchange for serving as a field site, the school was offered professional services by the research team, such as teaching courses or training teachers and students as participant observers. A sociology class was organized in the school, and the team also informally trained students to gather data, so that a number of students took field notes for them.

Several schools in this city had received unfavorable publicity in the newspapers, and consequently school officials were extremely sensitive about being studied. Consequently, the fact that the researchers were already studying this school for an earlier project meant that they had access to it, and this entrée was extremely important.

Difficulty of entrée

In working on a grant proposal, the researcher must realize that, while access to a school as research site is essential, it may frequently be difficult. Entrée has been so difficult, that first-rate proposals had to be turned down by the National Institute of Education because their authors were unable to get permission from local officials to study appropriate schools in their areas. One investigator stated that he believed that this problem would become even more serious in the future. He noted that many researchers have been extraordinarily rude, inconsiderate and unhelpful, disrupting the schools they studied far more than was necessary; and he reported that the public school system in his area had denied access to researchers from the neighboring university.

Access strategies

There are many pathways for attempting entrée into a school. One procedure is to go from the top down. Here is the way one investigator described her extremely successful tactics:

> When I began, I went to the county superintendent....I told him of my intentions. I was very clear about it all the way down the line, that I was very interested in looking at a multi-ethnic school. Because I didn't want at some mid-point for people to discover: "Oh! It's a touchy subject!".... And he approved. And then I went to the district superintendent... and then to several principals. Now, at a district level I was given access to proportions of children by ethnicity in the various schools and I found a district—actually three districts—that had the proportions I wanted, that reflected the [racial and ethnic] balance in the larger area... So I zeroed in on these districts, and I chatted with the principals.... And I got approval along the line. At that point I submitted the [grant] proposal [to the National

Institute of Education]. I had principals and their superintendent who were willing to let us use their sites: they had made a real commitment Then, I went to the school board and presented—about which I was very nervous, because that particular night, I was the last person on the program and none of the requests up to that point had been approved... It was a very representative school board with [members of all the ethnic and racial groups in the area], and they would split ethnically on everything. I thought, "Oh my goodness, when I come in with this proposal!" But fortunately it was one thing that they all agreed on, that it was a wonderful idea. And... I did make it very clear what I was about. I didn't want any misunderstandings... But I did do the top down, which I would really recommend. If you go the other direction, it's much more difficult.

When I then asked her about getting approval from the principals, this investigator said:

> When I went through this filtering process, I simply made appointments to speak with the principals and said what our needs were: we'd need to have fairly full access to the school, we would need to be able to get into the classrooms, to have access to the archival files. Basically, that we would want to have access to the school during school hours, and we would come to any meetings or programs, or whatever. I made that very clear, what the extent of our involvement would be.... Actually, the interesting thing is that nobody turned us down, anywhere, at any point along the way...they were very anxious to have us in. There were no problems in gaining access.

This investigator made her intentions clear, that she wanted freedom to "poke around" the entire school. She also made it clear that she wanted to give authorities something in return. She said:

> The main thing that we were going to give them was a picture of themselves as they did whatever it is they do in school. And I explained, I suggested that any one person in the school does not have the luxury to sit back and see how all the pieces sort of work, fit together; and that, being an observer, I could possibly do this for them.

This researcher's top-down strategy, her candor about what she wished to study and the freedom she needed in order to do so, and her offer of an outside and presumably impartial view of the way the school functioned, resulted in her gaining access, despite (possibly because of) the fact that she wished to study a sensitive and possibly explosive topic.

Adverse publicity

Many schools, especially those involved in desegregation, or mixed-race mixed-class schooling, have received unfavorable publicity in the media. As a result, authorities are sensitive to the possibility of future adverse attention, and investigators must frequently reassure them that their researches are not designed to draw unfavorable attention to the school.

The subject of newspaper publicity came up a number of times during interviews with the researchers. One school was just a block away from the local newspaper, and investigators said that because of its proximity, they believe this school received more publicity than a rival school in the area with similar problems. Desegregation and race relations are touchy subjects, and many mixed race schools have been mentioned unfavorably in local newspapers. Consequently, administrators are nervous about publicity of any kind. One school official told researchers the first time they met:

> I don't want TV cameras from [the nearby large city] out in front of [the school]... You'll have to get your publicity at someone else's expense.

Boycotts, strikes, and violent incidents had been associated with the process of desegregating two of the schools studied. Quite naturally, these drew the attention of the media, and heightened the sensitivity of local school officials to outside observation.

Studying "magnet" schools

Some schools are of particular interest to researchers because they have been designed to facilitate mixed-race mixed-class education. Rather than being typical of the area, magnet schools provide models for others, relying upon exceptional facilities and programs to attract middle class and white students to a school where the student body is mixed by race and by social class.

For example, one school studied, which was located in an otherwise heavily segregated school system, was planned from the beginning to have a racially balanced student body. Constructed in an

area which was accessible to both black and white students, this new school was provided with outstanding physical facilities and equipment, and with several prestigious accelerated and enriched programs for talented students. In all, the school was designed to serve as a model of high quality integrated education. Within predetermined quotas set to achieve racial and sexual balance, students were admitted on a first-come-first-serve basis. The researchers were particularly interested in observing what looked as though it were going to be a special school, which was trying to go beyond desegregation and to make integration work.

School system studying itself

Occasionally, one finds the exceptionally interesting situation of a school system which has been convinced that they should not only cooperate but actively participate in the study of one of their schools. In one case, a member of one of the six research teams worked for the school system in the study city. The administrators of the system were convinced by this investigator that a desegregated school be studied. This particular school, rather than one with similar characteristics, was chosen because it was geographically closer to the researchers, which facilitated study. Although no school can be called entirely "typical" or "representative," the investigators believed that this school, like many faced with problems of desegregation and race relations, was theoretically significant because it was an urban school, with a large population of children from poor families.

Moving in from the community

Researchers who study schools usually select the school, and then learn as much as they can about the communities from which the students come. In one case, the opposite procedure was followed. A school was selected for study because one of the investigators had previously done fieldwork in a neighboring black community. When the local community school was closed and the students bused to a formerly "elite" white school across the railroad tracks, the researcher decided to follow the students and investigate the effect of the civil rights movement upon a school in that area. The new school had an excellent academic reputation and, when desegregation began, a comparatively large population of white students, which facilitated comparisons between groups. During the two years of research, however, the black-white ratio changed from 60%-40% to 80%-20%. This made it somewhat more difficult to draw comparisons between black students and white but it gave researchers an excellent picture of a situation where white students, and their parents, became dissatisfied with a school, attempted to change the situation, failed, and left.

Studying a changing student body

In a large number of desegregated schools, not only the race but the social class of the students change. In analyzing the changes in these schools, it is all too easy for an investigator to confound the effects of race with those of socioeconomic class.

One investigator voiced a belief that many of the difficulties encountered by the school he studied were associated more with class differences than with race. He noted that this particular school had always had a group of working class white students whose relation to the school was similar in many ways to that of the working class black students who were subsequently admitted. Because the black working class students had higher visibility than white working class students, the problems of the school in relating to and teaching such students, and of the students in adjusting to the school, were highlighted.

Another team faced a similar problem, of the black-white ratio changing. Originally, they looked for a school with an equal number of black and white students, and went to the district school superintendent to help them find one. They found two appropriate schools, and chose the larger. But the summer before their study began, a court order mandated that the racial balance of the school had to match that of the district as a whole, and the student percentage went from 50-50 to approximately 70% black and 30% white. The investigators said that this formerly elite school was typical of their area, in that it went from being all-white to what was considered a black school. While the change created certain statistical problems, it also gave them an extremely interesting situation to examine.

4. Studying Students

The primary focus in most ethnographic studies of schools is on students, and the principal method used is generally observation.

Participant observation

The predominant technique used by one team was participant observation. This team included a particularly gifted fieldworker who had obtained excellent data on the beliefs, ideas and activities of the lower class black male students, a group that was not particularly interested in school, and whose members spent much of their time in forbidden and semi-illegal activities. This (white) fieldworker described how, in October of the first year of research, after "just hanging around" the school, he walked into a crap game in one of the basement bathrooms, and "the kids all kind of faded into the woodwork." He said: "Hold it, men! I'm here just to observe," and one of the leaders said, "Yeah, he's cool." From that time on, he reported, he was pretty much accepted, although the students never really understood his role. At first, said the fieldworker, the students thought he was a "narc," but after that incident, "everything was fairly smooth between us." (The identity of "narc" or narcotics agent was attributed to a number of the researchers, since several of the study schools had students who took, or dealt in, drugs during school hours.) Another researcher on the same project said that the first fieldworker was given a nickname after the bathroom crap game incident: he became known as "Officer Jones."

At first, "Officer Jones" intended to concentrate only on black students, but he ended up studying white students and middle class blacks as well. He said:

> . . . I chose the blacks because I didn't think you could maintain this dual role, across the boundaries. That proved to be wrong. Some of the white teachers actually said: "Why aren't you studying 'the good kids,' by which they meant most of the whites and some of the blacks? Why are you hanging around with that scum that hangs out in the gym?" That was a good question! . . . so essentially I took both groups and worked both sides of the fence, and did dexterously as long as I was not too open about my friendly relations. And I found out that one black teacher was playing the same game. You couldn't openly cover whites in front of blacks. So you had to be fairly reserved about these things. But when I got into the white territory, I was totally relaxed. And when I got into the black territorial area, I was totally relaxed. I just had to watch myself when I was exposed . . .

He said he started sitting in on classes immediately, and spent time "hanging around" a game room which had become a study hall for the black students. He made friends with a French teacher, who was the head of the French Club, where the white students went during their free time. The fieldworker would play chess with the white students at the French Club, or talk with them during lunch hour, or go to the gym and shoot baskets with the black students. A number of the researchers who studied high schools noted that different groups had different "territories" — areas which are informally "claimed" by various ethnic and racial groups. These included particular bathrooms, smoking rooms, a band room, a gym, etc. In one of these areas, a fieldworker could informally interact with members of the group who claimed this particular territory, and, because of the spatial segregation, not be concerned about rival ethnic or social groups.

"Officer Jones" had one piece of advice for white researchers who study mixed-race schools. "It's absolutely crucial," he said, "to remember black names. It's a key factor in research." He reported that white researchers, in his area, at least, tended to forget the names of blacks.

Few fieldworkers had as much informal interaction with students as did "Officer Jones." Many preferred to observe more, and interact less, or to take what one researcher called an "invisible man" approach.

Becoming "part of the scenery"

Researchers who "hang around" and interact with students for a long enough period—and who make it clear that they are neither teachers, nor persons evaluating the performance of teachers, nor informers reporting the "bad" behavior of students to authorities—generally find that their "visibility" decreases over time.

All the researchers reported that students who, at first would act self-conscious and express apprehension about their presence, later seemed to take fieldworkers for granted. One researcher told how the 5th and 6th grade girls at her school teased her about her advanced age ("Girl, you're pushing the years") and about her co-researcher ("She looks real *mean*, she don't socialize or nothing!"), using terms similar to those they used when teasing one another. Another investigator reported how, when a student was asked if any researchers were in the room when an incident she was describing happened, she replied: "I don't think they was in our room then...they might have been, 'cause I'm used to them, 'cause they come in a lot in different rooms...sometimes I don't see them." A number of researchers, when asked whether they had observed any illicit or forbidden behavior among students, reported a variety of behaviors, carried out quite openly in front of the investigator. These included swearing, copying notes during exams, fighting, skipping classes, gambling, drinking and taking and dealing in drugs. One researcher noted that "to be among street kids is to be in a state of quasi-illegality all the time." This investigator saw drugs, pills, drinking, smoking "dope" in the bathroom, selling hot goods, and said, "I knew I was in, when a kid offered me a dollar joint." The researcher believed that such behavior was an alternative for lower class black students to working in the secondary labor market, and said: "It was their survival mechanism." None of this behavior was written down, and the fieldworker would have denied having seen it, if asked.

One researcher noted that another member of his team had made "a beautiful set of field notes" of the interaction of a set of youths at drug selling points. The researcher managed to gain access to such behavior, although the students made jokes about doing their own studies, and seeing how far a fieldworker might bounce if he were tossed from a fourth-floor window. The researcher noted that there were frequent offers in the male student bathroom to "beat you up," but said it was a ritual gesture, and that nobody attacked anybody. When asked how the fieldworkers responded to such behavior, the researcher said, "How do you respond? In the right way!" He reported that the right way was "if there was a kind of meanness in the tone, you'd leave the bathroom; but, if they were joking, you'd kind of joke back." Another researcher noted that black males sometimes tried to give him a hard time, and on occasion would go into "the dozens" with him [a verbal game involving competitive insults]: if he would ask "Where are you going?" a youth might answer, "Over to your house to see your daughter!" or "your wife!" The researcher reported that although he might joke with them, he did not play "the dozens" back.

Formal observations

In addition to classroom observations, on a random or regular schedule, more formalized procedures can be employed.

For example, one team selected twenty-five "focal" students at the end of the second month of the study; these were balanced by race and sex, with an effort made to select a range of adaptations to the school. The teacher-student interactions of focal students were observed about ten times each year, for twenty minutes. Student-student interactions were also observed for the same group, in classrooms and in other settings such as the cafeteria. These were recorded as running descriptions, with certain categories of information (i.e. activities, who initiates the activities, forms of address used, movement patterns, etc.) always included. The research team carried out these formal observations, first, in an attempt to reduce bias and second, control the tendency of observers to find whatever it is they are looking for. The researchers reported: "Without guidelines as to who and what must be observed, we were concerned lest we focus only on students or teachers who were doing 'interesting' things or incidents that were exciting or bizarre, relative to desegregation. By purposely observing certain students for a pre-set amount of time, it was more difficult to pigeonhold students or teachers into simplistic categories."

Interviews

There are a number of techniques that can be used to supplement the observational data. One team collected a set of open-ended interviews at

the homes of ten students, once a week, for approximately ten weeks. In these *Talking Diary* interviews, the student was asked about what had gone on within the schools during the previous week. Another type of *Elicitation Interview* concerned terminology used by students to refer to other students, school events, and beliefs about these events and participants. (See Frake 1962, 1974; Black and Metzger 1969, Harding 1973; Clement 1974, 1976; Harding and Clement 1976 for more information about this type of interview.)

One team utilized intensive interviews of two panels of students: the first panel, of 20 students, who entered the school during the first year of the study, were randomly selected from groups stratified by race and sex; the second panel of twenty, who entered the second year of the study, under a new admissions policy, were selected in the same way. The first group was interviewed at the beginning and end of their first and second years; the second group, at the beginning and end of their first year. The interviews were structured, and primarily open-ended, but included a number of questions which could be answered by choosing a number on a continuum, so that the results could be evaluated statistically. (Copies of two interview forms can be found in Appendix A.)

Obtaining consent for studying students

There has been much talk about obtaining informed consent, and those contemplating research may wonder when, and how, a researcher obtains consent in a school situation.

The researchers did not feel that they needed consent from students in order to observe classrooms; indeed, they noted, obtaining such consent might have presented insuperable (and quite possibly unnecessary) problems.

Two teams reported that they had obtained written consent from parents before interviewing students.

One researcher reported what appeared to be an effective technique for gaining parental consent: a letter was written to the parents, asking whether the researchers could interview their child, and so get reactions to school, and what went on there; this was co-signed by the principal investigator and the school principal. If the investigator had not heard from the parents in two or three weeks, she telephoned and asked if she could answer any of their questions about the interviews. All the telephoned parties, except for one (who said there had just been a death in the family), consented and subsequently mailed in the signed consent forms.

Using photographs

Photographs can be utilized in a number of ways to gather data. (See Collier 1967 for suggestions on using photography as a research method.) In classes on fieldwork technique and problems, Margaret Mead emphasizes that the researcher who wishes to use a camera should carry it always, so that it becomes so familiar that it is almost perceived as a body part, and people inquire when the researcher happens to forget it. In this way, self-consciousness is reduced: people get used to the camera, in the same way, and during the same period of time, as they become used to the fieldworker.

One team carried out what they referred to as the *Photo Project*. This began as a simple attempt to thank the students for their help in the study. The researchers had noted that students kept asking to have their photographs taken, so they decided to let each student take—and keep—a color photo of whatever he or she wished. They soon realized that these photographs yielded sociometric data, since students selected favorite friends or teachers to be in the picture with them. Each student was asked "what did you take a picture of?" so the researchers could have the salient information in their own words (i.e. "of my friends," "of so-and-so doing such-and-such"). They compiled a list of each person in the picture, the student's statements, and a description including the race of the students, whether the subject was posturing, etc. This information was written on the back of the team's copy of each photo.

Another team also used photographs which, in this case, were unposed. The researcher went around the school for a number of days snapping informal student activities, to get a picture of cross-race and cross-ethnic group interaction. This particular team had found an unexpected situation in their school: there was much more and apparently friendlier informal interaction between racial and ethnic groups than the literature on mixed-race schools had led them to anticipate. Photographs were used by the researchers to help document their findings.

Sociometric measures

Another way to measure friendship patterns between and across races is to use sociometric measures.

For example, during the *Photo Project*, when students were given their photographs, each was asked to complete a paper-and-pencil sociometric test, naming the five friends the student would most like to have in class the following year, and also checking desired work partners from a list of

classmates. Another team used three techniques: (1) students were asked to sort a pile of cards containing the names of everyone in the class according to who played together; (2) all students rated the others in their class on a scale of 1 to 5, from "good friends" to "don't know"; (3) students were asked whom they played with the most. In addition to the more usual peer nomination techniques, another team used a sociometric "game." Because of the possibility that verbal or written peer nomination might not tap *behavior*, this team used the *Baretta Game* to measure classroom friendship patterns. Here the teacher chooses a student to be *It*, and this student must guess, using clues, the name of a well-known person the teacher is thinking of (i.e. Mohammed Ali, TV characters, the President). Every child in the class gets one written clue from the teacher. The student who is *It* then chooses someone else to join in front of the class. The second student shares his or her clue and the child who is *It* gets one guess. If successful, another student is chosen by the teacher to be *It*. If the guess fails, *It* chooses another child to get a second clue, and then keeps choosing students and reading their clues until the name is guessed. The students seemed to enjoy this game, and both teachers and students spontaneously remarked that the child who was *It* seemed to pick friends. (The researcher noted that it was wiser if the teacher selected the child who was to be *It*. When students were allowed to choose *It*, they tended to choose others of the same race and sex.)

Mapping seating patterns

Recording the race and sex of students who sit next to one another in classrooms and other school settings gives additional data on who chooses to interact with whom.

For example, one team regularly mapped the seating pattern in the school lunchroom, with the observer noting the race and sex of the students who sat next to and across from one another, as well as noting the location of empty seats. These patterns were analyzed statistically for two years running, to see if there were any discernable changes in cross-race and cross-sex interaction.

Network analysis

Network analysis offers another research method for following and mapping friendship patterns. (Descriptions of this method and its use can be found in Barnes 1954; Bott 1955, 1957; and Mitchell, ed. 1969.) This technique was used by several teams in the desegregated schools, with one drawing actual maps of the individual friendship networks of particular students, and mapping cliques of various students, noting the race and ethnicity of members.

"A day in the life of..."

Following an individual student, teacher or administrator through a complete day—or better yet, a series of such days—can give valuable data and insight.

One team presented a number of these *Days in the Life of* in their report, observing and analyzing social interaction, including patterns of approach and avoidance, involving those of the same and different racial and ethnic groups.

Enrolling in a class

Experiencing what it is like to be a student in a particular school can teach a researcher a great deal.

A member of one research team registered as a student in one class for a semester in order to observe classroom processes and student interaction. The student, who was in fact a graduate student of education, did not conceal his observer identity. Another team, however, placed within a classroom a "false" student, whose identity was known to the teacher but not by the students in the class. (This will be discussed further in a section on methodological and ethical problems in research.)

Observing outside the school

It has been noted that many students who come to school skip some or all of their classes, spending their time interacting with peers outside the school. Others, who attend classes, still spend significant amounts of time outside the school with friends. Clearly, this interaction is part of the student's school experience, and is of particular interest if a researcher wants to understand why students "skip" classes, and what they do when they skip.

One team went so far as to recruit a fieldworker just to study the area outside of and around the school building. This researcher, who was a college student, noted that among the identities ascribed to him at first by the other students, were that of "narco" [narcotics agent], "pusher" [drug seller], "streetworker" [community youth worker], "pothead" [addict], and "pimp."

Following the students home

The more a researcher knows about students' neighborhoods and home lives, the more

understandable their behavior in school becomes.

Several researchers, who studied desegregated schools, expressed regret that they lacked the time and-or resources to follow the students home and get to know their parents and communities. One researcher, however, did do this. He described how he looked for friendship networks, first, and followed them out, looking for leaders. Once he found the leaders, he reported, he was able to "walk back into the neighborhood" with them. There was one leader who was "cool" with a large section of the black males, and the fieldworker started going to his home and talking with his mother. "It was pretty cool between us," he reported; the youth is in the Army now, but they still communicate. This researcher would go home with students after school and "hang around" with them in their sandwich shop and shoot pool. His belief was that an investigator could not entirely understand students unless "you knew where the kids were coming from." This included their neighborhoods, their families, and the economic opportunities available for them after school.

Explaining the presence of the fieldworker

It is, frequently difficult to explain to people exactly what it is an ethnographic researcher is doing in the field. Projects are often complex, objectives may change as research goes on, and explanations may sound inadequate, lame—or so detailed that people are bored. Explanations, in fieldwork, are emergent: people begin to understand what the fieldworkers are doing as they see them doing it, and as they see what they do *not* do. In studying a school, it may be particularly difficult for researchers to explain to students exactly what they are doing there.

Members of two of the research teams in this project explained to students that they were writing a book about the school. Members of other teams were surprised when the children, themselves, came up with this explanation of the researchers' behavior. All the researchers took pains not to be identified as a teacher or as someone in authority who could get a student into trouble by reporting forbidden behavior. For each of the two study years one team brought in a teacher, to give a short course on anthropology; also, one of the members of the team gave a yearly lecture, using slides, on all the places he had been and the kind of anthropological researches he had done. According to the comments of the researchers, the students at their school became quite knowledgeable about anthropology and anthropologists. When asked what she thought a researcher was doing in the classroom, one student said:

> Write down how you be actin', what you doin'; write down everything you say; they write down the important parts what you say about people and stuff. . . they have to learn how we sit, like, the row and then they put the names of whoever's on the row. OK, it's like Belinda and them like to be talking and playing [and they write] 'Marlys and Belinda be playing with Earl.'

Taking, hiding and commissioning field notes

When researchers are studying a sensitive subject, such as desegregated schools, what do they do if students read over their shoulders, and attempt to see their field notes? This depends, to some extent, upon the researcher's temperament, and upon how open the team wishes to be about the purpose of the study.

The six research teams, here, and on occasion different members of a particular team, had different attitudes towards students attempting to read their field notes. A researcher noted that, in the team where members disagreed, the students openly discussed who would let them read field notes and who would not. Researchers who did not want to show their notes employed sloppy handwriting, shorthand, codes, and a special innocuous page they flipped to when someone looked over their shoulder, to discourage students from reading them.

When one team, at the end of their study, allowed some students, who expressed such a desire, to take field notes for them, they discovered that the students had their field note style down pat: the students' notes were written in the same style, and noted similar phenomena as did the fieldworkers. This team expressed regret that they used student data-collectors so late in the study; they said if they ever studied another school, they would initiate this practice much earlier.

5. Studying Teachers

Ethnographic observation of students in classrooms is, quite naturally, observation of teachers as well. And research designs which are focused primarily upon students and the way in which they interact with one another are frequently extended to include the study of teachers, when researchers realize that the beliefs and behaviors of the teachers affect the performances of students.

Members of the six teams studying desegregation originally received permission to study each school from the principal, but researchers were then told that they would have to negotiate access to classes with individual teachers.

Selecting teachers for study

In smaller schools, a researcher is frequently able to observe every teacher. Even in a slightly larger school, when investigating a particular grade or section of the school, the performance of every teacher can be followed. But in a really large school it is more difficult to decide which classrooms to select for study, or to fix upon a set of principles that should guide the selection.

One team, in the desegregated schools study, began selection on a more or less systematic basis. They first decided which grade they wished to observe, and then tried to get certain mixtures of subject matter of teacher race and sex; they also decided they did not wish to study the very best or worst teachers. This team asked for suggestions from the principal, and from an acting vice-principal. They also asked who to stay away from: they did not want to observe extremely "defensive" or "difficult" teachers. Although they started out trying to get a systematic sample, members of this team reported that, in the end, the teacher's cooperation was so important, that they ended up "trading generalizability for cooperation and rich data." Another team began research by asking the principal to recommend teachers who were willing to be observed. These vouched for the team to other teachers, who then allowed researchers into their classes.

Obtaining permission

Researchers who are new in a school are frequently regarded with suspicion by teachers. The observers most frequently present in classrooms are those conducting official evaluations of teachers' performance, and fieldworkers in schools have great difficulty convincing teachers that this is not their function. Naturally, this is particularly difficult because, in certain ways, the researchers *are* evaluating the teachers, even if their function is not official, and their judgments do not affect the teachers' careers.

New researchers, and those who had a comparatively formal relationship with teachers, reported that they made appointments with teachers to observe particular classes, on a regular or irregular basis. Those who had developed more informal, friendly relations with teachers often just asked: "May I come in?" or "May I watch today?" On occasion, teachers would refuse, citing a difficult class, a complex lesson, or that they were about to do something so dull the researcher "wouldn't be interested." The investigators reported relatively few absolute refusals, although on occasion they were barred from a particular class for anywhere from a week to several months.

The fieldworker as listener

A classic role for the ethnographic researcher is that of a sympathetic but neutral individual who listens to and sympathizes with the troubles of people in difficult or conflict-filled situations.

One fieldworker, when asked how her team selected teachers to study, said that the teachers selected them. "There were certain politically alienated people," she explained, "and we wanted

things from them, because the people who are unhappy are people who talk." Another fieldworker told how the teachers saw him as a support device: "they're finally going to get out how bad we have it, someone's finally going to write about us." "Essentially," said this researcher, "I became a chaplain." This fieldworker used an interesting metaphor, which was echoed by a researcher on another team: the role of the teacher, in an urban desegregated school, was compared to that of a soldier in the Vietnam war, with the researcher cast as foreign correspondent. "You're an outsider," he said, "a person who isn't really in the trenches where the action is. You can leave when you want to. You're not stuck." He continued: "You're doing the right things if they're surprised that you're there when you don't have to be. That's important in access. The feeling that you have to sort of find out what's going on, and that you're sharing and doing and getting your hands dirty with the shit stuff."

Taking field notes in front of teachers

Teachers' attitudes towards researchers taking field notes seems to depend not only upon the situation in a particular school and upon the personality of the teacher, but also upon the temperament and status of the fieldworker.

For example, a black graduate student researcher, who was frequently taken for a student in the school he studied, reported that teachers seemed to feel he was taking notes about them, and that he sensed that they were uncomfortable about his being there in the first place. They would sort of walk in front of him, he said, and try to look at his notes. Another graduate student said that, although very few teachers asked questions about his field notes, and none asked to see them—despite the fact that he would have shown them if asked—quite a few did make jokes about them to the students: cautioning "He's writing down what you're doing...you'd better get it together;" or characterizing the researchers in a joking fashion as "the people who take notes." Another investigator noted that teachers had three modes of approaching him when they wanted him to know something. First, teachers would come up and talk and talk and talk, until he finally figured out that they wanted to be questioned about a particular incident; when he got the clue, he would pump them and they would tell him. Second, when teachers were being interviewed, they would volunteer information, saying "you'd better get this down." The third mode was "confidential stuff," where teachers wanted to tell the researcher something, but would say, "don't write this down, if you tell anyone I said this, I'll say I didn't." The researcher reported that he would not write this kind of material down at the time, but would do so later, without identifying who told it to him, on the supposition that the teacher would not have told him if they did not want him to know. (One fieldworker told me that when people tell her anything confidential, she almost automatically, without thinking, puts her pencil in her book, and shuts the book, as though symbolically to say that she understands that the information is private. She does, however, write it down at a later time.)

Additional techniques for studying teachers

There are a number of techniques which can be utilized to supplement classroom observation. Researchers can *informally observe* teachers, sitting in the teachers lounge, attending meetings, talking with teachers after school, and lunching with them.

Several researchers noted that if an investigator wished to examine the social organization of teachers, noting who lunched with whom would be an excellent place to start.

A number of teams utilized *teacher interviews* of varying degrees of formality. (An interview on desegregation, administered by one team, can be found in Appendix C.)

One team utilized *videotape* to follow classes. Researchers had observed what appeared to be a pattern in their school of teachers focusing on five or six students, with the other students ignoring what was going on. After the first ten minutes of students "hamming it up" for the camera, the same pattern was evident in the videotaped classes. The team showed videotapes to the teachers involved, who expressed surprise that the pattern was so clear; they said things like "Gee, I never realized that was going on—except in thinking about it, of course it is!"

Reciprocity

A frequent concern of ethnographic researchers is to give those who cooperated with their study something in return. Ethnographic research is time-consuming, and cannot be carried out without the help of those being studied. Naturally, reciprocity is defined differently, by different researchers, as well as by the various kind of host groups.

One researcher contributed $150 to a trip fund set up by teachers who had been selling candy to

raise money so that an interracial group of students could go on a summer camping trip. In return, the researcher asked that the teachers allow themselves to be interviewed about the trip and to have the children fill out a few brief questionnaires. "That's a lot of candy to sell," reported the researcher, who said that everyone was happy with the exchange.

One team scheduled a meeting with the teachers, at the beginning of their research, and discussed what they wanted to learn or what the teachers would like to have from them in return. The team offered a copy of their report, but said the teachers did not seem particularly interested. They did, however, ask for help in teaching a section on anthropology in their social science text. Since the team did not want to be identified by students as teachers, they brought in someone else to do this for a week, each of the two years of the project. A member of the team who had stage experience, also helped set up lights when school performances were given, and helped in such tasks as decorating the gym for parties. For one team reciprocity was achieved by giving to each teacher a typed copy of the tape recorded interview.

Observing rule-breaking

Researchers who are trusted by those they study, and who gradually become "part of the scenery," often observe "backstage" behavior. Such behavior occurs around teachers as well as students.

When asked if they had observed any illicit or forbidden behavior among teachers, all the researchers made it clear that the phrase was too strong and that they had encountered little more than minor rule-breaking. One investigator observed incidents such as a teacher indicating that she had altered the votes in a student election so that a "suitable" student would be selected. This investigator also observed a teacher testing students for placement although this practice was prohibited in the school. The researcher said he had a problem when the teacher more or less asked: "Gee, should I have done that?" because the investigator believed the teacher should not, but felt he was not free to express his disapproval. Other fieldworkers noted a certain discomfort, when people sought confirmation of a point of view with which the researcher disagreed, typically, the fieldworker did not express this disagreement, so that the opinion of the other would not be affected. One fieldworker said he kept saying things like "I understand" when he was interviewing people. He noted that there are just not enough responses in our language for a one-hour interview, and the other person may think you are supporting his point of view when you are really just making sounds to keep him talking.

Research in factionalized situations

Ethnographic research, which takes place over a period of time, frequently uncovers the existence of factions or cliques. Schools are frequently divided into factions, composed of teachers and administrators; and, in desegregated schools, where new teachers and students have been brought in, the divisions may be deeper and the factions, more conflictual.

Many researchers reported situations where old-guard white teachers, who had been in the school for many years before the entry of black teachers and students, were separated by attitude and ideology from a new group of black teachers. One team described a situation where there had been initial declarations by everyone that there was great harmony between black and white teachers and students. After a time in the school, the team began to note divisions and, gradually realized that the white teachers who had at first welcomed the (white) fieldworkers, were now becoming less cordial. One fieldworker described how a white teacher tried to keep her from attending a school picnic, and when she did attend, she found this particular teacher and two other white teachers making racist remarks about the black students. She said she now believes this was the reason why the teacher had discouraged her from attending in the first place. Another member of the same team told how they would try not to get involved in teacher factionalism: "When people made racial statements, we would just listen, and note them down later," he said. "It was just standard procedure, you don't get a grimace on your face, you remain blank." It is easier, however, for fieldworkers to "remain blank" when the conflict does not involve their own personal values. Thus, one researcher, in a situation involving two factions, one of which was fighting, the other supporting the school principal, was able to remain so friendly with each faction and guard the confidences of each so well, that the principal, himself, told the researcher he admired his ability to get along with both sides. On the other hand, in the situation where the white teachers gradually became less friendly toward the research team, the researchers' positive attitude toward desegregation may have been perceived by the teachers, and those who disagreed may then have begun to distrust them.

Hiding the values of the researcher

How frank should researchers be about their own personal values? This involves ethical and methodological questions, for which there are no easy answers. Researchers who suppress disagreement with people or do not condemn behavior that they find unattractive, or immoral, may feel that in effect, the self restraint amounts to deceiving people, and that they themselves are being unethical. On the other hand, the expression of disapproval may lead people to alter their behavior, or hide it, which means that researchers may not be able to observe the very behavior they wish to study. Ideally, participant observation usually requires researchers to suspect disbelief and restrain evaluation so that they can discover what the people they study think about various attitudes and behaviors. This is particularly difficult when studying a question such as desegregation, which involves deeply-held value positions on the part of researcher and study population.

Although they tried to record phenomena as clearly and objectively as possible, members of the desegregation research teams did, in fact, have a specific value position. This was rather amusingly revealed by the statement of a graduate assistant on one of the teams, who told how she always felt uncomfortable with one particular black teacher, because, despite school policy, this teacher insisted on "tracking" students. (When teachers "tracked" students, separating them by ability, one found comparatively segregated groups or classes; when there was no tracking, groups and classes were mixed by race and social class.) The (white) researcher said that the (black) teacher was "too white," and then was extremely embarrassed that the remark had slipped out. (Social science researchers do tend to be politically liberal or radical.)

There was another position, held by researchers on schools, which was specifically mentioned by a number of the researchers interviewed. This was the "teacher as villain" point of view. Several researchers mentioned a genre of ethnographic literature in schools which blames teachers for racism and discrimination against lower-class students, for poor student achievement, and for making self-fulfilling prophecies about which students were going to become "winners" and "losers." One fieldworker, who noted that she had come from a working class family, via an education degree, and had spent a number of years teaching school, said:

> I tend to empathize with teachers more than I think generally [ethnographers] do. I sometimes wondered, myself, if I was a classroom teacher, if I would really let [an ethnographer] into my classroom. So many of them, being turned off by the middle class, tend to see teachers as epitomizing that aspect of American society they like the least. I don't feel that [ethnographers]—educational [ethnographers]—are giving teachers a fair shake.

I then asked if she thought ethnographers were turned off by the middle class because, as this researcher had mentioned earlier, most social scientists came from the middle class and were rebelling against it. She replied:

> Yes. They had been raised middle class and are—I don't like the term 'refugee'—expatriates, perhaps would be a better word, from the middle class. They seem to come down unfairly on teachers. And I'd like you to mention that, some time. I think it's an injustice. It's almost an arrogance, you know, that they're *dumb*... here you have a teaching corps made up of blue-collar upwardly mobile people, and they have been given the booby prize, an education degree. And then you get [ethnographers] coming through elite colleges...[thinking] "God, these people are dumb!" Where they're relativists to everything else, I don't think they're fair to teachers. ...they see what they're doing to the kids. And essentially their role, their latitude, their teaching role is so very narrow—they have so little room to maneuver in. And the most liberal middle class teacher can become so frustrated and so turned-around by the system, he or she is not even recognizable after a few years—what their original goals were. I came through that system. This was my mobility. Through the school of education, through teaching, and so on. And after I'd gotten through it, I wasn't a very educated person. People do become cops. Enforcers for the middle class...

This researcher believed that this snobbish and basically unsympathetic attitude on the part of ethnographers would make them less and less welcome in the schools, and also lead to a very limited and essentially false picture of what was going on, since by ignoring the structural constraints upon the teacher, and the teacher's part in the larger social structure, such researchers tend to attribute an illusory freedom and independence to the teacher and tend to hold the teacher responsible for faults inherent in the larger system.

Controlling for researcher bias

Because ethnographers constitute their own measuring instruments, their value positions influence research more overtly than in other types of social inquiry, where the effect of researchers' values may be masked by "scientific" and statistical techniques which appear to be value-free. (For a discussion of this and related issues see Polanyi 1962). Consequently, in ethnographic research, it is particularly important that researchers recognize their own values, state them clearly in research reports, and attempt to control them while gathering data.

In the section on studying students, I mentioned the technique of formal observation employed by one team. A researcher on the team that utilized this technique noted that he had been exposed to the genre of literature which blamed teachers for what went wrong in schools, and had written some papers on the subject. One reason the team initiated these observations was to help control an anticipated tendency to blame upon the teachers the bad things that happened in desegregated schools. This team, and others, employed a mixture of techniques—qualitative and quantitative, including interviews, observations of the same classroom by more than one investigator, and various kinds of observation schedules—all focused upon the same set of phenomena, so that by triangulation they could control for individual predispositions and biases.

Changing attitudes

Because ethnographic research takes place over time and because it involves much human and social interaction between the researcher and the researched, the two parties come to learn more about each other and to understand each other better. As this process occurs, the researcher's attitude toward the hosts will change as will the attitudes of the hosts toward the researcher (Wax 1971: 363-364). Thus, several investigators mentioned that by the time they had completed research in schools, they had acquired new respect for the skills of teachers in desegregated mixed-race-and-social-class schools.

When asked what preconceptions he started research with, a graduate student researcher said that the major preconception was the image one would conjure up of a big city school: violence, drugs, and lack of concern of educators. He said: "From the inside, there are many more facets than from the outside. It's very complicated (for educators) to handle; ...they had to deal with day-to-day problems all of the time. Sometimes I got to the point where I was amazed that the building was still there, and people still came to work, and the kids still got educated."

6. Studying the School Administration

Marked differences can be found in the focus of various studies of desegregated schools. An investigation which concentrates on how students get along with one another may examine teachers, because researchers have discovered that teachers' attitudes influence students' interactions. If, however, a study proposes to examine the social organization of a school, then, quite naturally, the school administration must be investigated.

Negotiating access

The permission of the principal must generally be obtained before researchers are allowed to study a school. Earlier, I discussed the strategy of one researcher, who found that an offer of a report by an outside observer of how the school functioned, gained entrée to several schools. In another school, the principal allowed a researcher into the school, after cautioning him, "Do not be a catalytic agent!" Several investigators noted that the principals of their schools were excited about the study, optimistic about the utility of the findings, and interested in helping the researchers gather data. One researcher described how on the first day of their study one team went with some trepidation to see the principal, since it was their initial confrontation with his school. After they were seated, he talked with them and at them for almost three-and-a-half hours. The fieldworker reported that they got so much information the first day that they could hardly keep it straight, and they had difficulty getting away.

Informal observation and interaction

Principals are highly visible as presences in their schools. Whether or not they move conspicuously around the building, their attitudes and influence are pervasive. Teachers discuss the principal and his directives, agree—or vociferously disagree—with his ideas and activities. Where there is conflict, the fieldworker is frequently utilized as a sounding board, with those who disagree with the administration airing their views and grievances. One researcher said that the team provided an occasion for the teachers to vent "their vituperative stories." "It was sort of like Hennie Youngman encountering a bunch of kindergarten kids who had never seen television," he said: the teachers had a new audience for their stories. They would express their point of view to team members and say: "Tell the principal. Tell him!"

The principal as mentor

Some of the most successful relationships, in terms of access to data, were reported by those who managed to form a mentor-student relationship with the principal. Interestingly, there were two categories of individuals who reported such relationships: junior female students and senior male professors. Two female student researchers reported that the principals, in the schools they studied, went out of their way to show and explain things to them. Student-researchers said that when confidential activities occurred behind closed doors, the principal on occasion would later explain what had occurred; one researcher reported that several times the principal interviewed students in front of her. Several senior male professors reported relationships that were similar in certain aspects: the principal would alert researchers when something interesting was about to occur, telling them not only what was going to happen, but what they should look at as well. In addition, principals made a variety of documents available to those researchers, including district memos, self-study reports, and other official records. The relationship between the principal and the senior male researchers differed from the relationship with the junior females, in that there was an element of camaraderie present. "We were buddy-buddy" said one fieldworker. Male researchers reported that the principals

seemed to enjoy their companionship and conversation. Senior female researchers, on the other hand, reported more formal and less frequent contact with the principal, and with other male administrators. One fieldworker said that the male administrators at the school she studied felt extraordinarily uncomfortable with her, that they were uncomfortable with women they could not pigeonhole in a secretarial or teaching capacity; she described how one administrator, who heard a student teacher addressing her as Professor Green, always elaborately referred to her from then on as *Doctor* Green, as though to explain why he wasted time with her.

Studying the principal

In addition to informal observation and interaction, researchers sat in the lobby of the principal's office to observe. One researcher noted that he soon learned that a closed door to an office was *closed*. He also learned, however, that if something interesting was going on, like a student being disciplined, and people were moving toward the office, there was a way the researcher could sort of stand at the side of the door—not in front of it, but at the side—and then had a chance of perhaps being invited in, when everyone entered the office. Some research teams followed the principal around for a day or longer, to investigate his problems, attitudes, and activities. This information was presented in one report as "A Day in the Life of a Principal." (In point of fact, this "Day" consisted of incidents that occurred during a week of observation, so that a cross-section of interaction could be displayed). In this section, activities of the principal were presented and analyzed, to explain the meanings of various reported discussions and behaviors.

Size and composition of the school administration

Quite naturally, the size of a school, and its grade level, determine how many administrators are assigned to it. A high school with almost 5000 students will have a hierarchy of administrative positions, as opposed to a grade school with 500 students, which may have only one principal to administer the school. Thus, the tasks of researchers studying the social organization of schools differ depending upon the size of the school and its administrative cadre. Although the principal is usually highly visible, researchers must frequently make specific efforts if they wish to investigate the activities of other administrators.

Among the administrators observed by members of the six research teams were guidance counsellors, police counsellors, assistant principals, and an 8th grade principal. For several weeks, one researcher sat in the office of an 8th grade principal for an hour a day, observing how many students came in, and the reasons why. The principal was interested in having this information, because he wanted more assistance. Another researcher observed in the office of the "police counsellors," policemen who were assigned to the school in order to help control violent incidents and to decide whether or not a particular incident should be classified as a crime. One researcher was in a privileged position, in that he played golf regularly with three administrators in the school studied. He said these men were friends, part of his "old boy network."

What do administrators want researchers to learn?

The answer to this question depends, in part, upon how harmonious are the relations among students, students and teachers, and teachers and administration in a particular school.

Thus, one researcher, who studied a mixed-race school, and was surprised to find the situation remarkably harmonious, said that the principal in his school was interested in his report because he believed it would demonstrate how well he ran the school. The researcher noted that the principal did indeed run the school extraordinarily well, and reported the comments of a visiting principal, who said: "In my school we have lots of rules, and nobody follows them; in your school you have no rules, and everybody follows them!" Another team reported that both teachers and principals were interested in their learning that there were no racial problems in the desegregated school that they studied, and that it was a good school. The principal, here, prided himself on the way he handled both black and white students, and he wanted the team to observe how he established rapport and handled problems. On the other hand, in more conflict-filled situations, administrators wanted researchers to learn their point of view, and to verify the fact that their course of behavior was the one only possible in that particular situation. When I asked one researcher in a difficult and conflict-filled school what the administrator wanted him to learn, he said: "I think mainly, that their job is overwhelming.... The pressures and demands that are placed upon them [administrators] are just way beyond the resources which are available for them to do those jobs..."

When I asked this researcher his opinion, he said:

> Well, if you define the job as they [administrators] do, yes, it would be impossible—given the staff they have—to control all those people every minute and every hour of every day. But the whole idea of *control* gives them something [tangible] to deal with. Even though perhaps they say that control is ineffective—it's a *ritual* of control.... What they say about teaching and things like that, is that they don't have time to deal with these issues, which are intangible, because it's so important that they work at keeping kids from hurting each other.

When I asked whether the administration had ever staged any performances for his benefit, this researcher replied, "No," and went on:

> In some ways the situation is quite paradoxical. While there is some anxiety about being thought well of, that's tempered by righteousness... God is on their side! They really believe that! So it isn't a question of their doing something differently [in order to impress an observer]. The question is, will I, as an observer, be smart enough to really see the essential truth in the situation?..

This fieldworker was able to understand and describe how the administrators perceived the school and their job, and then fit these perceptions into a larger view of the way in which the school functioned. This ability to identify the way a particular group of actors perceive events, compare it with the perceptions of other categories, and then construct a broader picture, from the viewpoint of an outside observer, is one of the strengths of qualitative ethnographic research. The subtlety, complexity, and interrelationship between various viewpoints and events cannot be tapped by questionnaires or other forms of quantitative research.

7. Strategic Decisions

Allocating resources

Before discussing various other categories of individuals who can be and have been observed by researchers studying schools, I would like to mention the important question of allocating scarce resources. Although some ethnographic studies of schools proceed as though the school were in certain respects a self-contained social system, rather like the small and isolated communities studied by classical anthropology, this assumption is closer to myth or metaphor than reality. (In point of fact, little communities, themselves, were not so isolated or self-contained as ethnographic reports may lead readers to believe; many classic studies took place at a time when a particular community or tribe was contending with representatives of a larger colonial presence, and the fact that the ethnographer neglected to mention the presence of the District Officer or the representative of the Bureau of Indian Affairs did not mean that contact had not occurred, or that the group had not undergone and was not still going through profound changes as a result of this contact.)

A school, although bounded, and organized, is in no way a social system. This is, of course, self evident. What is not so evident is which—if any, or all—of the outside forces impinging on it should an ethnographer study.

No matter how long the period of scheduled research, and no matter how generous the budget, a certain Parkinson's law seems to apply: fieldwork tends to expand to overflow the allotted period and strain the allotted budget. There are always more significant and interesting phenomena in the field than the research team has time and money to examine. Consequently, the most successful teams generally follow the pithy advice given—reputedly—by the poet Keats to his colleague, Shelly: "Curb your magnanimity, and load every rift with ore."

Going "up" versus going "out"

Because time, funds, and personnel are limited, most researchers must make difficult decisions about where to concentrate resources. And a strategic decision to focus on one particular aspect of a situation frequently means that another area must, of necessity, be neglected.

Among the tactical decisions made by researchers studying desegregated schools was whether to study *up*, to investigate the larger school system which affected the school they worked in, or to study *out*, to investigate the communities and home lives of the students. There was ample theoretical justification for each strategy, as each led to a deeper understanding of the way in which the school functioned, and this could not have been obtained otherwise; but, a decision to concentrate on either generally closed the alternate option.

Depth versus breadth

Examining the district level or the entire school system, as opposed to exploring students' home communities, are not the only ethnographic options. An investigator of desegregated schools can decide to focus primarily upon students and their interactions with one another, and examine other actors and phenomena only to the degree to which they affect this interaction. Here, a researcher deliberately narrows the focus, sacrificing breadth to obtain a depth view of what is believed to be a particularly interesting or theoretically significant phenomenon. On the other hand, a research team can decide to "go for broke," and investigate everything they can possibly come across.

There are different problems and payoffs associated with each strategy. It can be difficult for a research director or team to arbitrarily define limits, and then attempt to keep to these

limits in the field, when unexpected and interesting phenomena are constantly being discovered which are just outside these limits. But, the advantage of the sharply focused approach becomes evident when fieldworkers are organizing data and writing up their findings. Such focused data are more easily organized and reported than are those of broader-ranging research.

On the other hand, it is tempting for a researcher, and still more tempting for a sizable research team, to attempt to observe "everything." There are any number of relevant reports and background information which can be gathered; there are fascinating phenomena, which impinge upon and influence schools, and these can be explored; there are myriad groups within, and associated with, the school who can be observed. Although lack of personnel can cause difficulties, the most serious problems, here, occur when researchers must organize, categorize, and write up data. It is at this point that researchers who have cast a very broad net frequently discover that they do not know what to do with the catch. (This will be discussed further in the section on data collection, organization and analysis.)

One advantage of ethnographic research is its flexibility: a researcher in the field is able to identify an interesting and unexpected phenomenon, then observe and analyze it, explaining its relationship to the larger picture and processes. This flexibility can be a liability, however, if the researcher flits from phenomenon to phenomenon, without an integrating focus or plan to guide research. Fieldwork is characterized by serendipity; when ethnographers come across something particularly interesting, they are free to follow it; however, especially in team research lasting more than a year, serendipity as a research program can have fatal consequences. The most important decisions in ethnographic research may have to do not only with what to study, but what *not* to study: where to draw the line so that attention and resources can be sufficiently focused and concentrated to give a high yield in coherent, organizable, and theoretically significant data. Frequently, the optimum time to make such decisions is before research begins.

I have discussed strategic research decisions before investigating additional categories of actors who can be studied because the decision about who to examine has consequences, in terms of who is *not* examined, and in terms of the final picture of the way in which a school functions.

I have discussed studying students, teachers and administration. But, in point of fact, those who study desegregated schools can, if they wish, do minimal investigation of the administration. If researchers focus upon student interaction and cross-race relations, then teachers must be investigated primarily as they affect this interaction, and administrators need be examined only as their practices and policies impinge upon these phenomena.

When we move on, to explore the examination of parents and other school personnel, it should be clear that such examination is optional, depending upon focus and strategy of the researcher. Let me emphasize that I am not contending that such examination cannot yield rich rewards; I merely wish to note that researchers must decide how best to allocate and concentrate scarce resources. It is necessary to remember—and fatally easy to forget—that the purpose of a study is not the process of research as such but a report. And the most intensive, all-encompassing study is worth no more than the value of the report in which its findings are presented. Consequently, the decision to limit certain aspects of a study in order to amplify the report may, on occasion, be the wisest research strategy of all.

8. Studying Parents

The more researchers know about the home lives and communities of students, the deeper will be their understanding of student behavior. This is true of all background information: the more background the researcher can gather, the more comprehensible are the phenomena being examined.

One researcher had carried out a previous study in the community from which the black students in his school came. This gave him a unique advantage when he "went back into the community" with students: he knew people who could vouch for him, and he understood the structure, values, and economic problems of that community. Another researcher had a similar advantage: the chairwoman of her department had a son at the school being studied. Through this woman, and her husband, the researcher was introduced to a network of middle class parents, all of whom were concerned about the school, and willing to keep the researcher informed about new developments.

All the investigators conversed with parents who, for one reason or another, came to school, although some reported that parents rarely came to the school except when their children were in trouble. A number of researchers went to Parent Teacher Association meetings, and several attended school events, such as ball games, where they met and talked with parents. For a number of research teams, this was the extent of their involvement, although on occasion an investigator might go home with a particular student.

Three teams interviewed parents in their homes. (A researcher from another team reported that when she telephoned to request permission for interviewing a student, the mother said "don't you want to know what I think?" and then proceeded to give a half hour interview.) Parents, who were interviewed were selected in more or less systematic fashion. One team began with a list of parents who had been active when the school was desegregated, asking each parent who was interviewed to recommend others, including those with "different views." The team that had carried out formal observations on "focal students" also conducted structured interviews of parents on their attitudes toward desegregation; among those interviewed were parents of focal students and parents who, for one reason or another, had removed their children from the school. (Copies of this interview can be found in Appendix D.)

Several researchers expressed regret that they did not have sufficient time and resources to learn more about parents and students' home communities.

9. Other School Personnel

There are a number of school employees who may know a great deal about what is going on, and who, if they wish, can be extremely helpful to a researcher.

For example, investigators said that *school secretaries* had proved to be excellent informants. One researcher described how he would sit on a particular secretary's desk, while she was completing attendance forms, and she would "fill him in" on what was happening, including her interpretation of events. Another fieldworker said that a secretary in his school knew every parent and every child, and everything about them, including ethnic background, family affairs, divorces, scandals and so forth. The investigator said: "I couldn't ever do enough for that woman. If I had blown that, I would have been in trouble."

Custodians were also described as "knowing more about what was going on in the school than anyone," and one researcher said that the *cleaning women* in her school were helpful, on occasion alerting the team that something was going on, because they had to clean up the site. The *librarian* at one school was an excellent informant: she had free time, and enjoyed talking to the fieldworkers; she knew the elite students and knew what was going on; she would describe situations, and then introduce the researchers to students who knew about that particular situation. One researcher found that the school *social worker* was extremely helpful; at first, she was suspicious of the research team, but when she discovered that their views on education were similar to hers, she became quite communicative; because she had contact with a wide range of teachers and students, the researchers found her information and advice extremely helpful. Other employees who proved helpful included *elevator operators* ("they knew absolutely everything that went on in the school" said one investigator), *coaches, attendance counsellors* (who used to be called truant officers), and *school nurses*.

10. Studying "Up"

When discussing research strategies, I noted that ethnographers can study "out," or "up": they can investigate parents and the home communities of students; or they can explore school policies on the district or city level. (It was also noted that researchers could take a comparatively narrow focus, concentrating on a specific and delimited phenomenon, or they could take a very broad focus and examine everything they can.)

Two teams, studying desegregated schools, concentrated on gathering as much background material as possible. Social agencies related to the school were followed, including the police and welfare departments; and major policy issues affecting the school during the study period were investigated. Local newspapers, official records, and school district reports were examined; community members active in desegregation, interviewed; real estate records explored; and local officials interviewed. One report presented a large body of background material. The second team, on the other hand, used the background material primarily to increase their understanding of how various groups in the school related to one another.

A third team made a specific decision to examine the school district, as part of their study of the relationship between the races in the school they investigated. There were two theoretical justifications for this decision: (1) The researchers wondered how much influence teachers had upon the relationship between the races; or how strongly their behavior was influenced and constrained by directives coming down from the district level; consequently, they wanted to examine these directives and discover how district level policy was formulated. (2) The researchers believed that it was easier for an applied study, such as their own, to influence policy on the district level than it would be to influence policy on the school level; consequently, they wanted to investigate such policy, and its effects, so that they could suggest possible changes. The researchers used a number of strategies: team members regularly attended Board of Education meetings; district administrators were interviewed; and about thirty "issues interviews" were conducted with individuals who had been active in efforts to desegregate the city's schools. One researcher was proposed as a member of the School District Citizen's Advisory Committee, and attended weekly meetings for several months; he was the only committee member who was not a city resident. The same researcher was also proposed as a member of the Tuesday 1:00 Luncheon Group composed of influential businessmen and ministers who met weekly for lunch, with informal conversation followed by formal discussion of a specific issue, such as a new hospital, school mergers, or a new high school. The researcher attended meetings for the two years of the study, found that this all male mixed-race group gave him "a good tie" into district level people. He said that the Advisory Committee and the Luncheon were ideal for rapport and entree, and that the "issue interviews," many of which were conducted by a graduate student assistant, could not have been arranged without the high level contacts provided by these groups.

This team's report had a section on community politics and the process of school desegregation, one on the relationship of the school to the district and community, and a section at the end on the current and possible future effect of district policy upon schools.

11. Strategies, Styles and Philosophies of Fieldwork

Fieldwork differs according to the temperament of those who carry it out, their disciplinary affiliation, their methodological bent and their beliefs about what reality is and how best to observe it. There are a variety of styles, or models of fieldwork (Wax and Cassel 1978), involving different types of interaction between the researcher and those who are studied. Consequently it is difficult to define and describe the differences between "good" fieldwork and "poor," although these differences are clear to an experienced researcher, when watching someone conduct fieldwork or listening to them describe the way it was carried out.

A skilled fieldworker told me that one secret of good fieldwork was to put oneself in the learner's role. The researcher is learning from those who are studied, they are the teachers, while he or she is the student. Most people, she said, will go to great pains to teach someone who takes this role. This investigator described how, when she worked in a peasant village, she drove villagers to the clinic, loaned them money, wrote letters for them, took photographs and gave them to people. "You have to sense when people want a favor," she said. "Often they won't ask, but just beat around the bush. Then *you* offer the favor. Pick up the clues and offer—*put them in the position where they feel they have the upper hand.*" She noted that there are individuals who, by their temperament and behavior, shut off social discourse, as opposed to those who are able to listen and encourage discourse. She cited a scene from *Pathways to Madness*, where Jules Henry, an experienced and highly skilled fieldworker, was watching a mother bathe a screaming baby in ice cold water. She said that many people would be tempted to intervene immediately, and tell the mother that the water was too cold. Instead, Henry watched, and then asked the mother why the baby was crying. "I don't know," she replied, "I guess he doesn't like to be bathed" (Henry 1965). This highly skilled fieldworker was able to elicit the mother's perceptions of the event, rather than telling her how he saw it. My friend's advice to fieldworkers was to stand back and let the action take place.

Many of the best fieldworkers not only seem able to let the action take place, but are also exceptionally receptive in interaction. Rather than dominating conversations by putting on a show, they respond so that people who are with them tend to feel witty and interesting—whatever it is that makes people enjoy being with and talking to another person. Somehow, good fieldworkers tend to set things up so that people *want* to tell them things. For example, members of one team told how they started research in their school by interviewing the teachers they knew were sympathetic to their project, saving the most difficult and unsympathetic teachers for their last semester of research. By the time they got to these people, the teachers were anxious to be interviewed, and said things like "We wondered why you didn't interview us!" "Why did you talk to —— and not to me? *I* could tell you much more about that!"

Another fieldworker, who seemed to manage to establish rapport and obtain information from an extremely wide range of people including a school principal, police counsellors, an official on the City Planning Commission, and black and white parents, said: "It's better not to understand, and have people explain it to you, than to understand too much." Another fieldworker described how, when his fifteen year old daughter came with him to the school he was studying, she accused him of being a chameleon.

> He said: "You can't go native with the kids, but you can relate to them as an adult, and jive with them." He said, "You jive differently with the black kids, your hand expressions, your facial expressions would be different. The white kids, again, you'd approach them differently. Joke differently. 'How's that BS teacher treating you today?' You talk about their subjects, particular

subjects. You wouldn't do that with the black kids, you'd talk about basketball, or something of that nature. White middle class students, you'd sit down at their study table and start jiving with them about their lifestyle at home, on the street. You'd play toward their interests."

This researcher noted that these techniques take time, and that the fieldworker must spend a great deal of time "just hanging around" at school every week. Interestingly [illegible] fieldworker did not seem to be entirely s[illegible]erized a good fieldworker or h[illegible]ecessary skills. When asked h[illegible] whether you were hiring [illegible]ne said he had had to [illegible] had a girl worki[illegible]s kind of agg[illegible]someone whc[illegible]ted out that [illegible]sive, he said [illegible]."

Becau[illegible]ining and teaching [illegible] fieldwork, the novice fieldworker, like the intern or resident who learns the art of clinical medicine by watching and doing, frequently learns how to do fieldwork by observing or assisting a more experienced practitioner.

In interviewing the six research teams who studied desegregated schools, I noted what seemed to be a difference between the philosophies and styles of the anthropologists and sociologists on those teams. This could be characterized in a number of ways: as a comparative emphasis upon ends or means; as an openness about the presence and effect of the observer upon that which is observed, as opposed to a certain fear of the contaminating effect of the observer; or as a high value placed upon the use of the observer as a research instrument as opposed to a search for non-observational data, which can be measured or counted.

Although my listing sounds like a series of paired opposites, this is somewhat misleading: all the research teams were interested in ends as well as means; all relied upon data obtained by means of observation; all were interested in collecting data which could be counted or measured. What I am really describing is a relative difference in focus between the anthropologists and the other behavioral scientists who studied schools

How do researchers describe their study?

There is always a question of what to tell the people who are going to be studied about the purpose of the investigation. Will the description alter the behavior to be observed? Does one tell the truth, part of the truth or be somewhat "creative" about the truth?

I believe that the sociologists and other non-anthropologists who studied desegregated schools were more cautious about telling people that they were interested in desegregation or the relationship between races, for fear of altering these relations. One sociologist spoke of "the story line," which was described as "what you tell people you are doing, without going into an hour's explanation." He said that rather than telling teachers that they were investigating desegregation:

> ...our story line was that we are studying students and how they adapt to the school... what are the real changes that occur during school on all levels, the informal dimensions of student life.

If pressed any further, this researcher said they would explain that—

> ...on all sides we hear people say that school is a very important experience in the life of a student, yet we also hear it's too late to change in school, and we'd like to be able to answer that once and for all. Is it too late to change, or is there opportunity for dramatic shifts, because we had heard both of these.

When asked if he had ever lied or indirectly deceived those who were studied, a sociology graduate student said that there is always a question raised in this sort of work, because you want the response and behavior to be as natural as possible, but you don't want people to think you're doing one thing when you're doing another. He said he did not give the whole story, really. Instead, he told people he was studying how kids liked school. He could not say he was studying integration and desegregation, because that would have influenced people's responses too much; so he had to "fudge" a little. But somehow, he said, he didn't really like it.

The anthropologists, on the other hand, seem to have been more direct about what they were studying. One team scheduled a meeting with the teachers they were going to observe, at the beginning of their research. They told them what they were interested in studying, and negotiated with them about what they could and could not do, and what the team was going to do for the teachers in return (give them a copy of their report, and supply someone to teach a class in anthropology). Another anthropologist noted that

although he had to look less threatening to teachers, as though he were not evaluating their work, when in fact he was, he always "put everything out in front. I told people just what I was doing, and what I wanted to do."

An undergraduate researcher, who had taken a large number of anthropology and sociology courses, discussed the difference between his teachers, when he was asked whether he had ever lied or indirectly deceived people during fieldwork. He replied that he never had, but that he did use "props": he tried to dress and be acceptable to anyone he studied. "Because I try to take the position that I'm learning from them, there would be no reason for me to lie." He added, however, that he had seen the tactic and had found it used more by sociologists, but had never seen anthropologists doing this. He said:

> Now some of my sociology professors, they think it's okay to present things, lump them together, present them in a way that will not cause resentment, so that later, they can get different data. They're after something else.

When I said I was not sure I knew exactly what he meant, he explained:

> Okay, like to have professors tell me that it's better not to tell the truth sometimes, because then, it might influence the study. Now everybody interprets the objectivity of a study, and how to get it, in different ways. My experience at [the college] is that sociologists are more willing to deceive...

Open versus covert field notes

Does the taking of field notes influence the results of a study by reminding people that the fieldworker is doing research? Will people behave in a more artificial or strained fashion if they know that their words are being taken down?

Note-taking seemed to provide another example of a differing attitude toward the influence of the observer upon that which is being studied. One anthropologist openly took notes throughout the study, except for the first six weeks when he did not carry a note pad. Whatever happened, he said, including fights between students, there he was with notebook open, watching the reactions of everybody and taking everything down. He said he could sit down and write in his pad anywhere, people were that used to him. He said if he had to do it again, he would start off with an open pad right away: "If you had a pad open all the time, it would be very clear what you were doing, that you were writing things down." I told how Margaret Mead advised that a fieldworker who is going to take pictures should always carry a camera so that it was almost perceived as part of the person. This fieldworker assented, and said that by having the steno pad in front of himself like a camera, he is announcing that nothing is off the record. After he was asked if he had ever lied or indirectly deceived people, he added:

> ...in a way, the steno pad is an indication that you're not lying to people.... And maybe my reluctance to using the steno pad at first was, in a sense, dishonest.... It's very important that you always have that steno pad out there, even if you're not using it, because then you wouldn't be lying to anyone.

An anthropology graduate student said that she was very open about her field notes. Whenever students asked what she was doing, she would show them the notebook pages and they would say "Yeah! Yeah!" or they might disagree and tell her what they were *really* doing. Another anthropologist said that in all the countries and places he had worked, he had never had any trouble taking field notes during interviews. He felt that by the way he does this people are actually encouraged to keep talking, because they see he cares about what they are saying, since he is writing it down.

In direct contrast to this approach was that of a sociologist, who said that he was trained in graduate school to do no note-taking at all during interviews, but to sit through an interview for two or three hours and then go and dictate the notes. "You ended up with a splitting headache!" he said, "but you had the notes." And he trained his student assistants to do the same. He said that he honestly believes that note-taking is a bad idea in interviews, that it is better to look people in the eye and not take notes so that you can really remember what they say and come back to it. (When his team conducted formal interviews, however, they tape recorded these.) He said he took no notes when he was observing, unless they were very unobtrusive. For example, in a class, he had a code: "because you had to be very careful if the students ever picked up the paper, it had to look like doodling."

Non-reactive versus interactive research

The amount and style of interaction differs in fieldwork. This seems related to the academic discipline and to the personality of individual

fieldworkers. Sometimes I suspect that really good fieldworkers may resemble first-rate actors in that they appear to feel most alive, and enjoy interacting most, when they are "on stage" in the field.

One of the members of the study teams told how many of the students from the school would come visit him at his university campus to talk about his study. He said he enjoyed the experience very much: he really liked getting into the schools. It was something he looked forward to every day. He knew he's be among friends.

Not only did anthropological fieldworkers react to people, they interacted, directly and intentionally. Two female anthropologists played jacks with students (and one was teased when she said "Damn!" after missing a play); a male anthropologist played chess, pool, and basketball with students; and another anthropologist allowed himself to be appointed to a district citizen's advisory committee, which discussed local problems such as schools.

On the other hand, a social psychologist who had never done fieldwork before, said that she and her social psychologist graduate assistant had difficulty at first in their school because they started with the idea that — as in social psychology — the observer should be entirely unobtrusive and non-reactive. They were surprised to discover that non-reaction made them more conspicuous in the school than when they reacted. Finally, they learned that they had to react, at least a little, because otherwise the students just upped the ante: They would caper and push each other and do everything to be noticed if the observer pretended to be invisible, and not there. So then they learned that they had to act in a more natural way, and blend into the setting. "Non-reactive" observation appeared to be more valued by the social psychologists and sociologists.

Scientific models

I am discussing something that is more pervasive than degree of interaction. The degree and type of interaction is based in part upon different conceptions of what constitutes scientific objectivity.

Many social scientists believe that scientific methodology should approximate that ideal experiment of the natural sciences, where the observer interferes as little as possible—preferably, not at all—with that which is observed. In addition, as in the natural sciences, the phenomena which are observed should, ideally, be counted or measured.

One sociologist noted that their team tried to count everything in the school they could, and tried to use anything empirical they could use. That is why he likes yearbooks and newspaper stories: he went through the yearbooks of every year, and counted the students in every extra-curricular activity, how many blacks, how many whites, how many males, how many females. Then they made charts of these. He said his team "went in for counting." This researcher told how he gave typed summaries of tape-recorded interviews to those interviewed, to thank them and also to encourage the people who were interviewed to possibly write comments about the interviews. He described how, in an earlier study, when he did this, he sometimes received as much as 17 pages of handwritten comments on the typed interviews; he said of these handwritten comments: "magnificently empirical data!" To this researcher, "empirical data" appeared to be defined as data which had not travelled through the eyes or ears and out through the field notes of a single observer; "observer bias" made such data inherently less reliable than other types of data.

In the anthropological approach, on the other hand, the observer as recording instrument seemed to be prized and utilized. Rather than attempting to ignore the disturbing effect of the observer by minimizing interaction—concealing what was actually being studied or concentrating on non-observer-gathered data—the anthropological researchers in these school studies seemed to use a different strategy based upon a different view of the relation of science to reality. Here, science is viewed as a relative activity, where theory and methods must deal not only with the phenomena being studied but with those who study as well, whether they are observers or theorists. Thus, where the sociological approach discussed above assumes an observer separate from—or above and distinct from—the situation being observed, also assuming a situation that is static and stable, so that the very presence of the observer might contaminate the data, the reflexive anthropological approach assumes that social situations are so dynamic, so constantly in the process of *becoming* rather than merely *being*, that they are never free from interaction and so never "uncontaminated." Under these circumstances the issue becomes not the presence of an observer as a fellow human being, but of how the observer is perceived and responded to by the others in the situation. As a result, observers are not afraid of becoming part of an ongoing situation; they, too, produce and elicit behavior, as do the other actors. Emotionally and methodologically, they can be open, but

theoretically, they must be conscious of the situation and their part in it, describing it in such a way that the reader knows that the researcher is one of the actors. The scientific model here is not that of the classical natural sciences but modern physics, after Einsteinian relativity and the discovery of the Heisenberg effect, where the disturbing effect of observation upon that which is observed was integrated with the theory and the investigation.

I have attempted to describe a difference in fieldwork styles, strategies and philosophies which seemed to characterize the anthropologists and other behavioral scientists who did ethnographic research in desegregated schools. This difference, however, cannot be extended to contrast anthropologists with sociologists. It is more a difference between those who believe in and trust qualitative research, where the observer is the principal research instrument, and those who, although they utilize observation, have a certain distrust of a method which appears to be subjective and therefore possibly unreliable. One finds anthropologists, sociologists, and other behaviorial scientists in both groups.

12. Working as a Team

Social scientists who begin their careers by doing individual research may have difficulty learning how to carry out team research. In team research, various individual, stylistic, and methodological approaches must be coordinated; decisions must be made about who does what, and when; data gathered by different researchers must be coded and analyzed so that it is accessible; and researchers must be able to share ideas, tastes and problems.

Advantages of team research

When asked about the advantages and disadvantages of team research, all the investigators saw advantages beyond the fact that a team could cover more ground. Researchers agreed that the interaction between fieldworkers and also the emotional support provided one another were valuable. Said one: "You're not so lonely; and you can check on each other, and you have different perspectives. And it can be reassuring when you think you're crazy because you're seeing a desegregated school, or what you've been told is a desegregated event, and the blacks are sitting on one side and the whites are sitting on another!" A number of researchers mentioned the usefulness of having more than one person observe a phenomenon. One investigator said:

> You have a lot of areas to cover. And you have a need for a lot of different kinds of skills, and one person is not likely to have all of them. You need to have somebody, especially doing observational work, you need to have people with, at least, slightly different perspectives to check both fact and interpretation, to see if you saw something right—to check memories about a particular incident, and to check the interpretations...if there's a difference, then you can check it out, and if there's agreement, then you're a little bit more certain in your interpretation, a little bit more confident in your interpretation...And there are different roles, different *needed* roles. This is all in the field. There's also complementarity back in the workshop, and interpersonal support. It was a massive project we were involved in.... To do what we did in two and a half years would take *one* person more than that much longer. In other words, instead of taking seven years, it would probably take them eight or nine. Just the mental wear and tear would be a lot greater, I think, without having somebody else involved that you can talk about the thing with, especially if you are getting frustrated or depressed. There's that kind of support you can get from other team members—help in working out problems, checking your doubts against. All that outside-the field kind of interaction is necessary in a project as large as this kind of thing—where a lot of it depends on the person's interpersonal and field skills, as opposed to, you know, questionnaire development skills, and that kind of thing, or just straight analysis.

13. Who Was the Boss?

In the teams that had one principal investigator, there was no question as to who ran the project. There were certain questions in the teams which had two co-investigators, and hints that at times there had been disagreements, and perhaps conflict, about which course of action to pursue. A few investigators said that if they worked on a project of this size and scope again, they would make sure there was a more clear-cut line of command, with one person designated as the head of the project. One team, with two co-investigators did, in fact, designate one as Project Head. This team appeared to have had exceptionally harmonious relations: team members all seemed to know a great deal about the experiences and ideas of the others, and to agree on concepts, methods, and procedures. The co-investigators on this team had worked together before, and each had previous experience carrying out team research.

Disadvantages of team research

In the teams with equal co-investigators, each researcher apparently "did his [or her] own thing." This could be extremely successful, but on occasion, information seemed to have slipped through the net, with each investigator assuming that the other had taken care of that particular task.

The larger the research team, the more data were collected. On occasion this could be a mixed blessing, and those teams with the largest number of researchers seemed to have accumulated the largest amounts of undigested data. This was, to some extent, a question of degree: all the teams mentioned data which were not yet analyzed; but certain teams appeared to have gathered so much data that the materials were barely classified and seemed to defy any attempts at analysis.

Complementarity of roles

There appeared to be great individual differences as to how many types of individuals and groups a particular fieldworker was able to work with. Two researchers, on different teams, one male, one female, one junior, one senior, seemed to have an exceptional ability to get along with a wide variety of people. Each managed to establish rapport with males and females, blacks and whites, young and old. My guess, after talking with each, was that each was an exceptionally gifted fieldworker.

On the other hand, one team reported a rather compartmentalized division of roles to the point where one researcher noted that the team had its private joke the first year of research: at the school that they studied, the member who was, in fact, a college teacher, was always taken for a teacher; the member who was a college administrator, was taken for an administrator; and their young-looking graduate student assistant was always taken for a student. Each member found it comparatively simple to establish rapport with the group each resembled, and difficult to gain entrée into other groups.

The majority of researchers said that, although some groups were easier to establish rapport with, they could, in time, gain entrée into every group. A certain sensitivity on the part of teachers was reported by several investigators: the teachers seemed to be somewhat intimidated by researchers with PhD's; they wished to establish collegial relationships with the researchers, and on occasion, such relationships seemed to be easier to establish with graduate students. Again, there were different styles of relating to students, which depended in part upon status and age and in part upon individual style. Thus, some graduate student researchers seemed to identify primarily with students, and have little difficulty in relating to them, almost as peers. I have mentioned "Officer Jones," who seemed to be able to work out his own distinctive relationship with students.

And one researcher, who had children the age of those she interviewed, noted that eleven year old's found it easy to talk to mothers, and that she had stressed the fact that she was a mother when she talked with them, discussing pets, sports, and so forth, to put them at ease before the formal interview began. One researcher reported that, after two years of participant observation, he carried out structured tape-recorded interviews with teachers, and found that they were extraordinarily uncomfortable during this procedure; if he were to do this again, he said, he might have someone else, who had not built up a personal relationship over two years of time, conduct these formal interviews.

The ideal research team

When asked whether they had the right "mix" of researchers, or if ideally they would have preferred another mix, or additional researchers, a number of investigators expressed regret that they did not have a black researcher. One investigator summed up what seemed to be the feelings of many when she said: "I would have liked to have not just a black researcher, but a person who was a researcher who was black." One researcher reported that he regretted not having a black member of the research team, not only because that investigator would have been familiar with the behavioral styles of black students, but also because a black fieldworker could have served as a role-model to students, underlining the fact that such a role was open to them in the future. A black researcher reported that he felt that this was one of the advantages of his working on the project, that he was a role model for students; and another black investigator, who was a college undergraduate, noted that black students did ask him quite a few questions about college, what it was like, and what the entrance requirements were. Two teams reported that they had started research with black graduate student assistants but that, in each case, personal and family problems had made it necessary for the assistant to drop out of school.

One member of a large team, which studied a multi-ethnic school, reported that his team lacked only an Oriental researcher: they had student researchers, a high status investigator, Spanish-speaking and light and dark-skinned researchers; and they had an excellent Oriental informant, but an Oriental researcher would have been helpful. A member of a small team, on the other hand, said they didn't need another *kind* of researcher so much as just another *researcher*; he said that their project was understaffed and underfunded and, that if they had had more help, perhaps he and his co-investigator might not have lost twenty and ten pounds respectively, while writing the final report.

14. Do You Have to Be One to Study One?

Now we come to a subject which can be examined on an abstract level with little difficulty: do you have to be an *A* to study *A's*, or a *B* to study *B's*; or can *A's* study *B's*, and vice versa? This classic anthropological question seemed comparatively innocent in the days when anthropologists visited small, isolated groups, whose members, who could not read or write and did not wish to learn, and who could be assumed to be untouched by the larger outside society. Today, the question has become politicized, as indeed have many of the formerly isolated groups, so that there are members of specific groups and of social movements who believe that outsiders cannot comprehend their history of oppression and would consequently be ill-equipped to study their problems. To give just one example: when I investigated the contemporary American women's movement (Cassell 1977), feminists of all ages and beliefs were extraordinarily helpful: not only did they want to tell their story, but many believed that women should help women, and by helping me with my project they were helping another woman. Some of these feminists would not have cooperated with a man and would have, in fact, felt indignant or resentful that a man should presume to try to interpret their ideas and experiences to the outside world.

This issue is based on the classic epistemological question of what is knowing, and whether one individual can in any meaningful way know or understand the reality of another. I shall not address myself to this question. It is, of course, ultimately unanswerable, as is the question of whether *A's* can study *B's*. There is no definitive answer, and individual answers are more a matter of belief—or hope—than of proof.

We must raise the issue, however, and individual researchers must devise their own answers—especially if they are *A's*, presuming to study *B's*.

In a highly politicized area, such as the relationship between men and women or blacks and whites in the United States today, there are always going to be some *B's*, who tell the *A's* who study them, that their attempt is misguided, based upon *hubris*—or perhaps, *chutzpah*. And there will probably always be some researchers who feel worried, and even guilty, when they presume to attempt such a study.

I have noted that a number of the investigators who studied desegregated schools expressed regret that they did not have a black member of their research team. And several mentioned a black critic, at a professional meeting, who seems to have exposed preliminary reports to scathing criticism on the grounds that the research did not have sufficient "black input." I encountered one investigator who, it seemed to me, had hired someone primarily because of the color of the fieldworker's skin: the researcher described a situation where an untrained black research assistant proceeded to gather "really wild" three-hour home interviews from parents, only a small part of which proved to be usable, as these included card-playing and parties; he said he had to spend hours each week counselling this assistant, who had both personal problems and problems doing the research in the school, so that he had to make great efforts to defend this assistant to a co-investigator, who did not think the assistant was competent; he added that this assistant made more money on the project than he did, because only part of his time was budgeted for research; and that eventually, the assistant became ill, and had to leave the project, without completing the fieldwork reports. The researcher made it clear that he felt this assistant was indispensable because the assistant was black, and that in a racist society, it is absolutely necessary to have black input into a research involving relations between the races: "I consider [the assistant] an informant," said the researcher. Interestingly, this project had a white student

assistant who reported being given instructions to interview only white families and leave the black families to the black researcher; the second assistant, an exceptionally gifted fieldworker, who managed to get information from a wide variety of individuals and groups, said:

> . . . my own personal life is one where I've had the experience of living in [a large city] in black neighborhoods and black buildings, you know, where the tenants were all black, and I feel very comfortable around black people. In fact, because I'm from this area, my speech pattern . . . I can understand black people on the street. I don't have trouble relating to black people, so I resented it when they told me I wouldn't get as good an interview with the black people, and I told them they were wrong. And so I made it a point to interview both black and white. I wouldn't be pushed into interviewing white people [only].

With the exception of "Officer Jones" and the student assistant, who both seemed to have the ability to establish rapport with members of widely divergent groups, most of the fieldworkers did note that it was easier to establish rapport with those with whom they had something in common. Thus, one investigator reported that the composition of his team (a pair of senior people, one male, one female, and one junior person) enabled each member to "plug into" different aspects of a situation and develop particular relationships with particular people that the others could not. Nobody, he said, was excluded from anything because of skills or sex, but age and sex (members were all white) did make some things easier. If similarities help facilitate relationships in the field, then indeed a black researcher might establish rapport in certain situations with greater ease or speed. Consequently, it would make *good sense* to have a black team member, if a capable one can be found, but it is probably not absolutely *essential*, especially if he or she is not particularly competent. Ideally, of course, in team research, it would be beneficial to have both *A's* and *B's* studying both *A's* and *B's*. As the white fieldworker, who did not want to interview only white families, noted: "A white interviewer might be better at interviewing a black because they notice things and ask about them, that a black might not, and vice versa."

We have discussed *A's* studying *A's* and *B's*, *B's*, where the difference between the two groups is race (or, more accurately, what one research team referred to as "social race" in order to distinguish between *race* as a biological concept used to describe populations, and *race* as a status characteristic used primarily to refer to individuals). We could, however, conceptualize the matter differently, and use *A* and *B* to refer to class differences. We might, then, ask whether middle class researchers are able to understand and interpret the experiences of those from the working class. "Officer Jones," who established great rapport with black working class students, reported that he grew up in a working class neighborhood, and that, although he never wanted to be working class, and worked like Hell to get out of it, he always felt comfortable with working class people; he enjoyed them, and enjoyed their views of life.

A fieldworker I know, who did research among lower class workers in the Caribbean, described a family planning study which recruited black middle class social workers to interview lower class black women. "They would come into the country villages in their high heeled shoes," said the ethnographer, "and they couldn't speak the patois, and they couldn't believe the way the people lived: 'Do these people *want* to live like that?' " Apparently, the data gathered by these social workers were not of the best quality. My friend wondered whether middle class blacks were not frequently ineffective doing research among those from the lower class because they might have difficulty overcoming the desire to tell lower class blacks how to get out of their situation: "After all," she said, "the middle class person did it, and feels good about it, and would like to help the lower class person. Consequently, middle class researchers want to *tell* them, not listen: *they find it hard to put themselves in the learner's role.*" (She emphasized that she was not saying middle class black researchers could not study lower class black people, merely that to do so, they might have to overcome a tendency to intervene or advise rather than observe.)

One of the researchers on desegregated schools expressed a similar view:

> Blacks, middle class blacks tend to operate somewhat in the same way middle class whites do. I started off with one male black assistant. I worked with him in the neighborhoods, the street, and so on. . . But I found both my black assistants doing the same thing that the black middle class teachers would do. They'd preach to the black kids, the street kids. They couldn't really appreciate this option—this irregular economy that the kids were involved in—that their adult values, that the middle class value system just didn't hold up in their lives, in their

survival. I'd get very impatient, quite often, in knowing that they're doing the same nasty things to the kids that the black middle class teachers would be doing. In seeming to be very empathetic, they're really screwing them up. You'd catch them evaluating their behaviors, and they'd be saying, 'You should be doing this, and you should be working on this!'... And it would rile me quite often and I would take off on them. I'd say 'You shouldn't be doing this,' and so on, but they could never understand this white honkey saying that I shouldn't be trying to improve their lives.

This investigator concluded by saying: "So, I would say, emphatically, 'No!' that black interviewers cannot elicit more than, say, a white interviewer. It depends on the skill of the interviewer, himself, not his race."

We come back to a point that was made before, when discussing fieldwork styles and strategies. Fieldworkers must *stand back and let the action take place*. Remember Jules Henry watching the baby being bathed: there is a great temptation, when watching a disturbed mother run icy water over a screaming baby, to intervene and help her and help the baby. But is it perhaps not more useful, and even more helpful, to find out what she thinks she is doing and why. In this way, it may be possible to influence not only one action, but an entire course of behavior. Any characteristic that enables a fieldworker to stand back and watch a particular situation is useful; any characteristic that leads to intervention before it is absolutely necessary (if the mother were injuring the baby, it might be necessary to intervene) is maladaptive. And it may be harder *not* to intervene, when you intervene for a living, when you are a nurse or a teacher or a social worker, or when it is your own family, or your own people, whom you think of as family. Thus, if you are an *A*, and feel very strongly about it, you may have difficulty standing back and watching what seems to you to be maladaptive behavior on the part of other *A's*.

We also noted that the fieldworker must take the learner's position. This, too, can be difficult for people who are in a higher status teaching or helping role *vis à vis* another group. Consequently, if you are a high status *A*, who has spent much time and energy trying to persuade and help other *A's* change certain patterns of behavior, it is going to be difficult for you to let these other *A's* teach *you* what they are doing and why. Your commitment is not to *learning* what they are doing, but to *changing* it.

I am not contending that *A's* cannot study *A's*, whether *A* is defined as social race or class, nor am I saying that only *A's* can study *A's*. There are advantages in likeness, whether of race or class, in building rapport and understanding unspoken assumptions. There are also disadvantages, in taking assumptions for granted, rather than examining them, and in being cast as someone who is going to change things rather than learn how they are done.

I noted that the question of *A's* studying *A's* or vice-versa is ultimately unanswerable, as is the underlying epistemological issue. Nevertheless, it will be frequently asked of those who contemplate, or are conducting research in desegregated schools. Consequently, investigators might do well to think about all of these issues and come up with some personal, even if provisional, answers.

15. Data Collection, Coding and Analysis

A long-range team research project has three aspects: collection of data, analysis of data and writing a report. Inexperienced researchers may concentrate their efforts on data collection, forgetting that the best data in the world are no better than their analysis and presentation in a research report.

Consequently, this section will concentrate not only on types of data which can be collected when studying desegregated schools, but also on methods of analysis.

Collecting and recording data

Ethnographers have utilized many methods of collecting and recording field notes. In the section on fieldwork strategies and styles, different views of note-taking were discussed, ranging from field-workers who believe that notes should be covert, or recorded after an interview, to those who keep their field notebook prominently displayed, openly recording everything that takes place and even allowing their notes to be read. There is no "right" way; researchers must decide which style suits their personality and approach, and they may discover that different methods work for different occasions.

In traditional anthropology, the fieldworker generally records events in a notebook and then later types up her notes (I say "her" because a male anthropologist lucky enough to have a non-anthropologist wife in the field frequently utilizes her services to type the field-notes).

On the desegregated school project some members of the research team typed their own field notes, but most researchers took notes by hand (or took no notes, as the case might be) and then dictated these into a tape recorder, to be later typed up by a project secretary. Some teams used a tape recorder to record interviews, which were later transcribed. (Researchers on this project used similar methods, because the Project director visited teams, at the beginning of the study and strongly suggested that they use the methods he, himself, had found efficient and successful when he had carried out fieldwork in schools.) Having a secretary type the notes has advantages, and disadvantages. Having someone type one's notes does save time. There is a certain advantage, however, to writing field-notes by hand, then typing them oneself, and then going over them again for analysis: it helps both to familiarize and at the same time to distance the fieldworker from the data, since each procedure helps transform *happenings* into *data*. In addition, typists do make mistakes and the fieldworker must proof-read notes typed by someone else. Also, if the project secretary gets behind, notes—and consequently analysis—can be seriously delayed. All the teams used a similar style for typing the field notes, suggested by the project director:

Lines were numbered, starting at the top of each page with 1. The typing was single-spaced and occupied only about two-thirds of the page, leaving the left-hand one third of the page entirely clear, so that handwritten comments, and coding, could be placed there. The numbers at the beginning of each line enabled fieldworkers who were writing a report to cite the material concisely: for example, "line 6, page 28, Joe's notes; follow by line 22, page 306, Ralph's" (See Appendix E).

Types of data

In discussing the various categories of actors who can be studied by a school ethnographer, I listed various strategies and techniques utilized by the six teams who studied desegregated schools. Let me summarize these here, so that a researcher can go through the list to find a technique which is appropriate for a particular problem or setting. Despite the fact that there is a certain overlapping, it may be helpful to have all the techniques listed together:

participant observation
observation
standardized observation of focal students
informal interviews
elicitation interviews
standard schedule interviews
"issues" interviews
sociometric interviews or questionnaires
sociometric game (Barretta Game)
seating charts
videotaping classes
organizing and recording group discussions
attitude surveys
content analysis of:
  local newspapers
  student yearbooks
  student newspapers
"a day in the life of" (following an individual for a day or longer)
network analysis
having a researcher register as a student for a semester
home visits
"talking diary" (weekly interview with student, at home, about events of the previous week)
collecting or noting:
  the daily school newsletter
  letters from the school to parents
  wall decorations
  mottos
  posters
  pictures
  bathroom grafitti
school records:
  attendance
  enrollment
  self-study reports
  PTA manuals
  report card forms
  teacher evaluation schedules

Quantitative versus qualitative data

I noted that the qualitative researcher can discover unexpected phenomena. For example, one team discovered, to their surprise, that there was a "taboo" in their school, a set of unspoken behavioral norms which kept students and staff from referring to racial differences. This type of completely unexpected phenomenon is difficult, perhaps impossible, to discover and identify through quantitative research techniques. Once identified, however, its incidence and range can be measured by quantitative techniques. A number of researchers combined quantitative and qualitative techniques, so that they could locate and identify phenomena, and then measure and test their findings with quantitative techniques. For example, when the team discovered the taboo on discussing race, they placed questions about this taboo in the structured interviews which were conducted with students.

When asked which were the most effective techniques, and which they might not choose to employ again, members of the team that used the most varied combination of research techniques said that what was most important was the balance among the various methods; they reported that employing a variety of qualitative and quantitative techniques to examine the same phenomena helped them check the reliability of their findings; consequently, they believed that no single technique was as effective as a mix.

Two researchers discussed the value of qualitative research in helping to interpret and judge quantitative data on similar phenomena. One investigator was working with the economists; because of his qualitative research, he was able to say of various figures and hypotheses presented by the economists, "that just doesn't make any sense." He said his qualitative research gave him an idea of process, of how things worked, which allowed him to evaluate the quantitative findings.

Two researchers brought up another point about qualitative research, however; they mentioned that in their particular disciplines, and university departments, quantitative research was most highly valued, and that the high prestige journals in their fields specialized in quantitative data. Consequently, both researchers worried whether their commitment to qualitative research might not hamper their academic advancement.

Coding and analyzing data

The best method I have ever come across for coding and subsequently analyzing data is "the constant comparative method of analysis of qualitative data" described by Glaser and Straus (1967:45-77). As described by the authors, the system utilizes file cards; but for team research in a large study, it could be based on McBee key sort cards; or, could easily be computerized. I, myself, proceed as follows: my field notes are handwritten. Subsequently, they are typed on the right-hand two-thirds of the page, leaving the left-hand third of the page for coding and comments. Each line on the page is numbered consecutively, starting at the top with line 1. Pages are numbered consecutively. Every week, the

typed notes are coded into analytic categories, which are handwritten on the left-hand margin. (See Appendix E for a page of my field notes.) For example, among the categories used to code for this report were *be one to study one, notes,* and *data analysis and reduction.* When incidents are coded for a particular category—and they can be coded for more than one at the same time—they are compared with previous incidents in the same category. Thus, I have a file card titled *be one to study one* which was alphabetically filed under the letter *B*; when I coded this category, noting that on, say, *page 250, line 34,* there was a remark or incident that fit into this category, I had previous pages—say *page 211, line 10,* and *page 12, line 13* —listed on the card, which referred to typed field notes, containing comparable incidents. Ideas and questions which arise during coding are noted in a memo—which is written on the margin of the field notes and coded in the same card file. Thus, under the category *be one to study one* I may have a listing that says *page 250 memo,* or *page 380 quote,* if my field notes contain a particularly good quotation on the subject. After a number of incidents are coded into a category, it frequently becomes clear that several categories can be merged into a larger, more inclusive category. *Be one to study one,* for example, originally started out as file cards labelled *black researcher, white researcher,* and *A studying A's?*

For this or any other method to work the *coding must be carried on at the same time as the fieldwork.* This means that one cannot, as did one team, get the last of their notes into typing some four months after the fieldwork was completed, when a good part of the research report had already been written. This also means that investigators must code their own field notes, working together or separately, since hiring a non-fieldworker for coding will result in categories which are not those of the researcher, and consequently cannot be used by investigators to (1) guide further research and (2) organize the final report.

Two teams utilized comprehensive and extremely well-organized methods of coding and sorting data, involving copies of typed field notes, which were placed in separate file folders, according to category. Then when the researcher was interested in a particular category, the file folder containing notes on that category could be pulled out.

One researcher carried out extensive coding and analysis of a large body of interviews. Here is the researcher's own description of the process:

1. I worked with an advanced undergraduate to define likely coding categories on the basis of logic and the purpose behind asking a question.
2. The student would go through the interviews and
   a. locate precisely the answer to each;
   b. record the location, the "heart of the answer"(quotes not paraphrases), and his or her coding of it.
3. I'd look over results and revise or refine coding system if it seemed warranted. Student would recode if necessary.
4. Student would write a summary looking both for overall patterns and for group differences.
5. Summaries for related questions would be compared.

The researcher noted that the sheets on which the codes and brief quotes were recorded were very helpful: they were a good place to start in refreshing one's memory about a set of interviews; and they were helpful in locating representative quotes for the project report, and other writing.

Despite the amount of work it involves, coding which is carried out at the same time as research has three significant advantages: (1) the process of sorting data into categories can suggest new interpretations and hypotheses, which can then guide further research; (2) data are organized so that researchers know what they have, when they have enough material on a particular category or group, as well as which areas need investigation; and (3) devising categories further stimulates analysis, and helps guide the organization of a research report.

No researcher told me a team's notes had *not* been coded or analyzed but, when I asked how coding and analysis were caried out, there were certain hesitations in responding, which led me to suspect that perhaps these operations had *not* been carried out, or completed. Not surprisingly, the reports which seemed to me to be the best organized and to contain the most perceptive analysis, were produced by the teams who were most explicit and comprehensive about coding and analyzing data.

One researcher noted that although she used a card file to sort data, writing interpretive essays was her principal method of sorting. She recommended that researchers begin to write—and circulate or present—papers about their findings almost immediately; in this way, they can see the gaps in their data, and then can go back and get the information they need. Because she

started writing papers early, said this researcher, she had no trouble composing the preliminary first year research report; as she had a body of written materials already available and organized.

Each team had three to four thousand pages of single spaced typed notes, which meant that coding and analysis were exhausting procedures. One researcher said that if he ever did a project like this again, he would think seriously of demanding money for computerizing field notes, because even a simple manual search for content categories had become a major undertaking.

16. Writing a Report

To repeat something that has been said before, the best and most interesting fieldwork is no better than the report in which it is presented. This fact is not as depressing as it may first sound, since what then follows is that the difference between a *gifted* and a merely *good* fieldworker may be equalized later in the research process, when findings are analyzed and presented. As a result, intelligence, insight, and the capacity to write clearly and expressively are as important, in bringing a research project to completion, as is ability to gain entrée and build rapport.

After having a preliminary report ferociously criticized by a panel of anonymous reviewers, one researcher had marked difficulty writing a final report. He then noted that an investigator must keep in mind the difference between writing a "marvelous Levi-Strauss ethnography" and a final project report. This researcher's advice was not to use unrealistically high standards, which can become a way of slowing down, but instead to "do a report and *get it done!*"

An experienced senior investigator recommended that researchers think of the report as a set of inter-related essays. In this way, one does not have to think about producing an entire book, a task which can be intimidating. He suggested that it was useful, early in the project, to compose a table of contents for the volume, and a set of tentative titles for the essays, relating the essays to the kind of researches the team anticipates doing. He noted that a version of the investigators' research proposal can frequently become a chapter in the final report. Then, as researchers come across particularly interesting phenomena or findings, they can and should write an article or essay. Such essays, when collected, will comprise the bulk of the final report. The researcher made another point, citing advice from Helen MacGill Hughes, "Don't write everything you know in one book." He emphasized the fact that a book or article did not have to contain all the findings of the investigators. Instead, he advised: "Write as much as you can in time for the due date."

Several researchers noted that writing articles helped them prepare the larger research report. And quite a few said that six months, which is the writing time allotted to the researchers on desegregated schools, was too short a time to compose a good report; some cited Rosalie Wax (1971:45), who says that the researcher should allow as much time for analysis and writing as was allotted to fieldwork.

The task of writing was shared in various ways by members of the research teams. Some divided the writing of chapters and sections of the final report; in other teams, each researcher would write a section, then trade and edit co-researchers' sections; in one team, two researchers did most of the writing, while another researcher edited, proof-read, and made sure that the material was typed correctly.

One team cautioned that they had made a mistake in turning in a 500-page draft of their final report. They said that the experts hired by the government agencies to review such reports tend to get them just a few days before the critiques are due. Because this report was so long, the reviewers had an unanticipated burden that created a hardship.

When asked what audience the report was written for, the responses were as varied as the writing styles. One researcher simply said, "the National Institute of Education." Several teams reported that they wrote primarily for their colleagues, for those in their own discipline. Others said that, although they had not written the report for teachers and people at the schools they studied, they did keep them in mind, and tried to imagine how they might respond to what was said. One investigator said he really wrote for himself, trying to make some sense of what was going on, although his findings were also addressed to other social scientists.

17. Running a Project

Many investigators with little experience doing team research have still less knowledge about running a large research project. A fieldworker who is used to working solo may not realize how much knowledge and skill it takes to run a team project well. An investigator who, when writing a grant proposal and planning a project, has focused primarily upon the research task, may discover that running the project takes time, energy and expertise and that a mismanaged project interferes with the research enterprise.

Members of the teams who did research in desegregated schools varied widely in administrative experience and facility. Those with talent and experience had useful advice to offer, and even those with little experience and proficiency were able to describe specific pitfalls and difficulties so that future investigators might benefit from their mistakes. Their advice is manifest in the contents of this volume.

18. The Budget

Writing a grant budget

A senior researcher said that it is particularly difficult to compose a budget for ethnographic research. If the investigator goes to experts for assistance—people who specialize in designing budgets and turning them in to the government—these specialists rarely understand qualitative research; consequently, they are unable to anticipate the kind of expenses which will be incurred doing ethnographic research. My informant said:

> . . . really, what one has to do—in defiance of all kinds of scientific notions, defiance in the sense that in science you think of a voyage into the unknown, and you don't know what you're going to be doing—with a budget, you have to have a rather concrete research plan, and then know what the various aspects of that plan are going to cost. And that, I find, is often very difficult. I don't *know* what research procedures I'm going to want to be doing a year from now. But I have to make the best damn guess I can.

The researcher continued:

> One should also remember that federal agencies are used to approaching budgets with meat axes. There are people in federal agencies whose mission in life is to look at a budget and decide "this is fat and should be pared." And one, therefore, cannot put down a figure. One has to put down a figure with a justification.

My informant noted that the justification can be written in the budget for the federal agency, or the researcher can put it away for the time when it becomes necessary to argue with the agency. But, one cannot just say, "I'll need $10,000 worth of supplies"; the researcher must be prepared to offer a justification for the figure.

One investigator described how his team's careful and detailed budget was pulled apart by a contracts officer, who quite literally asked them: "How do you know how much paper clips cost?" This team, whose members had considerable experience running and administering grants, had composed a very exact budget: they had broken the project down into twenty tasks; for each task, they had estimated who would be involved and for how many hours or days; in this way, they were able to present the number of anticipated hours each person would spend at each task. The team's original budget was $5000 higher than the one the contracts officer negotiated them down to; and the project ran exactly $5000 over the new budget. The researchers said that they made a conscious decision to go over—the data were there, they felt the research was important, and the opportunity might not come again, so they used their own funds to carry out one section of the study.

Several researchers reported having their estimates of duplicating costs cut by the federal agency. They all noted that they had spent far more than the allotted amount for duplicating. (Several researchers said that they had been required to use their own university departmental duplicating facilities, which cost them 10 cents a page; they recommended that researchers find out whether they, too, would be required to do this, before they compose their budgets, and they advised researchers to make sure they allow enough money for duplicating.) When discussing how the contracts officer from the National Institute of Education had cut down her team's estimated figures, one researcher noted that she is a panel reviewer for another federal agency, which takes the opposite tack: instead of worrying that researchers are going to "rip off the government," the second agency wants to make sure that investigators ask for enough funds so that they can do the research properly.

I asked researchers whose funds had been cut whether they advised writing "fat" into a budget so that it could then be cut by a contracts officer. No one seemed to feel that this was a particularly sound policy. One informant pointed out that

researchers must be careful not to price themselves out of the market. Another, advised that a team might set up the project so that there were two or three tasks which would be helpful if carried out, but not seriously detrimental if omitted; then, if money got tight, these tasks could be omitted.

One investigator described how she had left the budget to an officer at her university who specialized in grants and budgets. She was short of time, the grant proposal was not yet completed, and the university officer was extremely knowledgeable. After the grant had been approved, this researcher discovered that she was budgeted for a very small percentage of her time. As a result, during the two years of research, she carried a heavy teaching load and spent much more time than she was budgeted for working on the project. Her advice to researchers was to do your own budget, and if this is not possible, to scrutinize the budget carefully before it is submitted.

One researcher suggested that those unfamiliar with composing budgets would do well to study a project budget which had been approved by the particular government agency to which their grant approval would be submitted.

Several researchers reported having difficulties with university contracts and administration offices. One investigator had to hand-carry his research proposal to Washington because it had sat for several days on an officer's desk waiting for a routine signature. One team said they rarely bothered to submit expenses below $30 because it took so much time-consuming paperwork to satisfy their grants office. Another researcher reported that her team needed 25% more secretarial time than estimated because of all the forms required by the contracts and administration office at her university.

Following a budget

Some researchers have no trouble with budgets and figures; others are allergic to this type of detail work. The second group, who may be tempted to skip this section, are the people who should in fact read it; the first group will find these suggestions elementary.

One informant emphasized the necessity of keeping books. "They're not real hard to keep," he said, "but it's important, especially for an academic type who doesn't like to do it." He suggested that those who have great difficulties with this hire a part-time bookkeeper to show them what kind of records to keep, and to do their books one afternoon a week. He said one must keep careful records, that a researcher "can't just have little pieces of cocktail napkins with scrawls on them, telling you when you took an informant out to lunch." He summed up his advice by saying, "It's your ass, personally and professionally, if you don't keep good books."

Several informants advised researchers not to trust administrative accounting officers in their institutions. Said one: "People over in central processing make errors, and they don't understand what they're doing, so that you, yourself, have to have on your project somebody who enjoys working with these budgets and checking up on the central office people and defending your budget against their charges." He noted that accounting officers may charge a project for expenses that were not incurred or, alternatively, neglect to record actual expenses for several months, leading unwary researchers to believe they have more available funds than in fact they have. To guard against this, someone on the project should keep a running record of expenses, and check this against the central office's figures.

One informant suggested that investigators would do well to project their costs and come up with some average figures on the fixed costs of a project. When you know the things you *have* to do, he said, you can get an idea of the things you'd *like* to do. For example, he and his co-researcher were each scheduled to put in 50% of their time on the project during the summer. Because the project did not have a secretary or graduate assistants for a few months, this researcher was able to calculate costs and plan ahead so that both investigators worked full-time during the summer. He pointed out that this can only be done if someone is really watching the budget, keeping options in mind, and making financial decisions ahead of time.

19. Project Personnel

Hiring fieldworkers

In a large research project, the principal investigator or investigators frequently are unable to carry out all of the fieldwork. For example, in a school, where there are a number of classrooms to monitor, cafeterias, lounges, hallways, bathrooms —a multitude of ecological "niches" or territories frequented by various groups—it can be helpful to have more than one or two observers. This raises a host of problems not faced by those able to rely upon their own efforts and skill. How do you find good fieldworkers? Can you identify ability ahead of time, or must a researcher choose the most likely-looking candidate and hope for the best?

A senior researcher, who confessed that he, himself, had hired both good and poor fieldworkers, said:

> . . .what you want, in one sense, is nosy people, people who are curious. And it's a kind of delicate thing, you can be easily misled. You can think of this sociable person as being a very good fieldworker, but the gregarious person can be so busy talking, that that person becomes too visible and dominates too much. On the other hand, the rather shy person can be so shy that it's painful, and they will do everything possible simply to avoid going to the research site. . .And so that in one sense, the ideal fieldworker is the kind of person who is like some more traditional [American] Indians that I knew, who could kind of fade very naturally into the landscape, and yet be very observant.

Ideally, project directors hire researchers whose work they know. One team did just this: their principal assistants had worked with the project director on earlier studies, and taken courses with him. This team seemed to have exceptionally harmonious relations between junior and senior investigators, with agreement on technique, timing, attitude, and goals.

There is a crucial difference between hiring people you know, and people whose *work* you know. One researcher hired two friends, neither of whom had had previous fieldwork experience. The researcher said that she now realizes she did not make it sufficiently clear just what she wanted from the fieldworkers, and discovered that the female employee expected to be paid for three hours daily travel to the research site and back; in addition, she expected to start work late, and end early, so she could drop and pick up a young child from school. My informant suggested that one discuss salary, hours, fieldwork, and weekly conferences with the employee ahead of time, and then *write everything down*, so that there is no chance of mistaken understandings.

One investigator devised a set of hypothetical questions to ask potential fieldworkers, such as "Imagine that you're hired, and I've gone to school and arranged for you to be in a classroom, and it's the first day, and you've observed a class. What do you think is going on in the teacher's mind, and what do you think the teacher is concerned with?" When the candidate answered, the informant would then ask, "How would you answer these concerns of the teacher?" The researcher said she found great variety in the subtlety with which candidates would approach such a task, and questions like this seemed to help her differentiate between people who, when interviewed, all seemed intelligent, pleasant, and interested. The researcher had other questions, such as "If you've assured the teachers that you are not studying them, but the children, and they are still concerned, what do you do?" The informant reported that some candidates said they would confront a teacher directly, which she believed to be an unwise course of action, while others, figured out ways to reassure teachers through their behavior. Another informant suggested that a potential employer might devise a fieldwork assignment, asking the candidate to interview

several students or teachers and turn in field notes, paying them $10 or $20 per interview.

One team employed several undergraduate researchers. There seemed to be a trade-off, here: the undergraduates generally worked for class credits, rather than money, as opposed to graduate student researchers, but a great deal more time and energy seems to have been spent training the students, monitoring their work, and listening to their troubles.

An informant noted that a big problem with graduate student researchers is that their commitment may be low, unless they are getting an MA or PhD out of the project, or unless they were part of the original development of the project. He noted that an employer must make sure fieldworkers are interested and committed. For one section of their study, one team hired a group of black interviewers who were recommended by people at the field site; the team described the project, told the new employees what they were looking for, went through pilot interviews and demonstrated ways of establishing rapport. My informant said that with new employees, one must take time to describe the study, establish rapport, confidence in the director and interest in the project.

A graduate student researcher, who entered the field with few directions, said:

> I didn't know anything. I mean I was, as they say, cold turkey. I went in there not knowing what to look for, not knowing anybody in the school...I didn't have any aim and it's reflected in my field notes. My field notes, frankly, were poor as far as I'm concerned...I got a few things, I guess, that were interesting, but I think the main thing is to, when the person is going into a situation, give them some direction. Say, "look at what's going on in the locker room, what's going on in the johns. [Tell them to] focus on either areas or on situations." "What happens when a teacher says this?" Or "what happens when a teacher turns his back on a classroom? What are the reactions of the students when a sub comes in?"...in each one of these areas, there's so much information. I couldn't get it. There wasn't enough direction in my own head to be able to get that information...I mean, if you are interested in a particular circumstance, tell your observer exactly what you're interested in. Have them go in and look for that. If they see something else, great! I mean, all the more power to you. But if you miss that, you know, you're missing a lot. And, damn it, I know I missed a lot, and it's frustrating as a researcher, and as a beginning researcher, you know, book-trained. It's very frustrating.

Hiring secretaries

Some teams utilized secretaries while others made do with typists, either part-time or full-time. In a project which generates three to five thousand single-spaced pages of typed fieldnotes, it is essential to have adequate typing services, especially if the researchers wish to rely on clerical help to handle their dictation. One informant gave his own job description:

> ...You really need a kind of severely catatonic person, who is enough in remission to type, so they can come in the mornings, put the earphones on, and type all day. And these people are damned hard to find. We burned up one, and almost burned up another one...and the last gal we had was conscientious enough to keep at it, but it damned near killed her. Literally. I mean, she had a heart attack trying to keep up. The thing I feel worst about that whole business, is that she didn't keep up!

How does one find a good secretary? One researcher was convinced it was "the luck of the draw." Another said it was particularly difficult if the employer had to go through a university personnel department, and hassle with them: He had to write a job description, and then when people were sent over for interviews, he would discover they had not even seen the description of the job. One researcher recommended that employers carefully screen references. He said:

> It's very important even to get a friend, who is a secretary, to check out the simple basic competency of this person. To do something as simple as to give the person a slice of work that you will expect he or she will have to do. One can be misled. People put on very lovely performances, and these days, once you've hired a person, it's difficult to remove them from the staff.

Several researchers said they were not sure they would hire a full or even half-time salaried secretary if they had to do it again. They noted that the work was irregular: at times there was a great deal, and at other times, little for a secretary to do. One investigator found student secretary-typists were very good, better than full-time workers; he said that they squeeze their work into

the shortest possible time, so that they have more time to do their own work, and noted that he tries to pay these part-time secretaries more, or say that they worked extra hours (i.e. reporting 30 hours, when in fact they worked 20). The way to retain secretaries, he noted, is to keep them involved in what is going on: for example, the informant discovered that his present secretary used to write novels, and he now gives her full latitude to edit everything he writes; now that he knows she's good, he doesn't even look at it; he writes, she edits and gets it out. She has full responsibility.

An informant noted that if one uses a secretarial service, it is necessary to give very careful instructions. She employed a service to transcribe some tapes, and neglected to tell them that she wanted the tapes transcribed verbatim. As a result she had to go through the typing and tapes, correct the manuscript, and have it all typed a second time.

20. Administering a Project

One researcher, who seemed to have a great administrative ability advised researchers:

> Set up ways of doing things, and then don't mess with them. Don't second-guess them, and don't change your procedure. If you're going to change something, when you're ready to change, find out the way the people who work for you think it would be more efficient. They usually know.

He noted that:

> ...You have to be responsive to what other people are doing and not get miffed when other people violate your system. When people have something they want to do, unless there's a real reason for squelching it, let them do it. That's part of their excitement. Don't squelch their excitement.

Another informant suggested that a written document, detailing exactly what was expected from an employee, was useful not only when hiring personnel, but also when an employer is discussing someone's work. He said:

> I find it often very useful, when I'm going to be dealing with a subordinate, to put together a written list for myself of the points I want to make sure I cover. And it's even better, if I can give that person, when they leave, a letter or some kind of document that outlines these in some detail, so they have it and can look at it and reflect upon it... One should reduce to the minimum the possibility that someone will say "Oh, I thought you wanted me to do *X*" when, in fact, you've been hoping that they were doing *Y*, and now, three months later, you don't understand why it is they haven't done that.

(This policy could have prevented the situation reported by one researcher, who hired a friend in Canada to do computer work, and found that the completed work arrived a year and a half late. A contractual letter could have prevented this situation, or allowed the researcher to give the job to someone else.)

A researcher who did not have a co-investigator suggested that a project director might write into the budget someone to take care of administrative tasks, such as scheduling, logistics, budgeting and relationships with the researcher's institution. He noted that all these tasks take time, which could otherwise be used for research, and thought that perhaps an intelligent secretary could take care of some of them. Several informants mentioned the difficulty of carrying a full-time, or nearly full-time, teaching load while doing research; they said that, in effect, they had held down two full-time jobs, and advised researchers to make sure to schedule enough time on the project.

A number of researchers discussed the importance of regular meetings of project staff. On the other hand, one team did not have regular meetings; instead, members mentioned the advantage of proximity: they worked close to one another, and saw each other very frequently. This team had a small room set aside for the project: it held a number of file cases; a bulletin board, on which was the team's classification system; a table; and a corner filled with several years worth of newspapers from the study city. I believe that the fact that the team had a specific location devoted only to project material, was helpful in organizing and coordinating members' efforts.

21. Advice to Researchers

When asked what advice they might give members of a research team who were funded by a government agency to study a school, several informants focused on the difference between ethnography and other types of research. "Shed your positivism," said one, and "Don't think of ethnography as an inadequate approximation of a quantitative study." "You're going to do inductive reasoning," said another. A third noted that personnel are really crucial, getting the right people to do a job, and added that it will probably take more time than expected just to run the project.

"Don't disrupt the school more than necessary," said one informant: "They have a right to expect from you unobtrusive research and high professional conduct." "You've got to allay everybody's fears," said another, "and you also have to be as humble there [in a school] as you would be on an [American] Indian reservation." The researcher laughed and noted that ethnographers were becoming more humble every year. This researcher said that ethnographers come on "too strong" with teachers. "They come in with their degrees, and the teachers—after all, it's probably the least advantageous profession there is today. There's no money in it. And there are very few rewards in it any more. So, by God, you can't come on threatening. You have to come in as a very supportive person." Another informant made a similar point, noting that there is a tendency for field researchers to take the attitude that they can be better functionaries than the people being studied. This ends with an approach where blame is cast, where somebody has to be a villain. The researcher said:

> You have to come to know these people with sympathy, but you have to resist the notion that it's your task to do their job better. It's your task to understand *how* it is that their job is so horrible. And you have to begin to look at that total configuration which indicates to you how it is that the job is so horrible. This includes all the structural constraints on their job.

One informant advised researchers not to throw government weight around. They should present the project as "Here is a case where the government is finally interested in what you're trying to do," rather than "the government trying to tell you what to do." The approach should be "the government trying to *listen*" rather than "the government trying to *dictate*." She also suggested that researchers not isolate themselves too much from project officers, unless they proved to be bad or unhelpful, and noted that government officers can provide help and ideas. A senior researcher summed up his advice by saying:

> . . . think about the project as a whole, and the time period as a whole, and the fact that, at the very end of this, in fulfillment of the contract, one has to have a report. One *owes* a report, just in terms of the dynamics of the contract . . . you're not being paid just to do the research, you're being paid to present them with a written body of material. But one owes that report even in a more profound kind of way. One owes that report as a professional obligation. You are imposing on your respondents, on the school, on an awful lot of people who've given you, often with considerable grace, a good deal of time. And if all of that data is going to remain locked up in your thoughts, and is not going to see the light of day, you've not done a professionally moral job.

22. Relationship with the Sponsor

A number of recent articles discuss the problems of the contract researcher studying schools, caught between a school administration which may have much to hide, and an unwieldy and, on occasion, unreasonable government bureaucracy (Burns 1975; Clinton 1975, 1976; Colfer 1978; Firestone 1975; Fitzsimmons 1975, Herriot 1974). According to these accounts, the government agency's relationship with the ethnographers was marked by a trail of broken promises, clumsy interferences, and general bureaucratic bungling. Many of these descriptions come from a single project, which seems to have been plagued by bad luck, political difficulties in the field and in the government agency, and by changing congressional directives.

Prospective researchers who have read these tales of woe and wondered what they were getting into, may be relieved to learn that the researchers on the desegregated schools project did not seem to encounter difficulties of this scope or magnitude. Staff changes, when they occurred, did not alter basic policy; promises were not broken; and confidentiality was not violated. The original contracts and research proposals pretty much determined what investigators examined, and the relationships with project officers, when compared with the earlier accounts, sound almost idyllic.

Original proposal

Few researchers seemed to feel that they had deviated significantly—or at least seriously—from what they originally had proposed to study. One noted that his original proposal was "extraordinarily generous," and laughed, saying that a multitude of studies could have come out of it and fit within the framework. Another noted that in ethnographic research, "You put in a lot of this stuff, but you know you're going to do your own thing as an [ethnographer]," adding that "You have to be an opportunist in the field: when an opportunity arises, you have to follow it through, whatever it is."

Only one researcher found a completely unexpected situation. He described how he had set out to examine what makes "winners" and "losers" of children, especially when influenced by race and ethnicity. To his surprise, he found a school where winners and losers could not be predicted by race or ethnicity, and consequently decided to study just *why* that unusual (at least, in the literature) situation prevailed.

Relationship with project officers

Although there were some minor complaints, and disagreements, members of most of the teams reported harmonious, and even helpful relationships with the project officers. (There were two of them: the officer who originated the study left the agency and was replaced by another.) The majority of informants seemed to agree with the researcher who relported that the officers "really took an extraordinary hands-off attitude." Interestingly, members of several teams reported that one officer was more a theoretician, interested in ideas and findings, while the other was more interested in meeting schedules and getting work done; but one team reported a diametrically opposed situation, where the "theoretician" was seen as an efficient administrator, while the officer described as an administrator was perceived as being particularly helpful with ideas and hypotheses. One team reported that the project officer acted almost as an auxiliary fieldworker: on a site visit, he had interesting and useful discussions with a member of the school board, the school principal, and others.

The first project officer visited most of the field sites, telling researchers how to collect and record their notes, and how to set up their projects. Most fieldworkers found this helpful, although a few found the approach overly directive. This officer had done research on the subject, and was

emotionally and intellectually involved in the findings."

Although researchers complained about details—all, for example, wished that there had been more conferences, so that teams could exchange ideas, techniques and findings; and many were unhappy about not receiving copies of the other teams' research reports—the majority of researchers agreed that the project officers had been helpful and supportive and had made no inappropriate demands.

Advice to a government officer

When asked what advice they would give a government officer directing an ethnographic study of schools, many team members seemed to agree with one informant who said: "Choose your grantees very carefully, and then let them alone." One informant said that he would be very interested in the notes and the records kept of data, and would check the team's retrieval system. Another noted that you can't really tell till the end, whether you are getting someone good, because good field notes are not really enough, a researcher must have enough intelligence to put everything together, to make sense of the notes. This researcher, who turned in a highly-regarded report despite having no previous fieldwork experience, pointed out that an officer should look more at training and basic capabilities than at whether the researcher has had previous experience of exactly that sort.

Several informants emphasized that a project officer must be patient, that ethnographic studies take more time than other types of research. Said one:

> It's a different kind of research than what has probably been done in the past for that agency. It's a study that's probably longer term, if it's done well, and it takes a lot more involvement than some other kinds of studies. You're going to be a lot more involved with people in the field, their lives and problems, than if you were dealing through some kind of instrumentation. The researchers are prying a lot, watching and hearing things, because of the long-term interaction, so more ethical problems come up. It's harder for researchers to keep their objectivity... You have to make sure the people have enough time to do the fieldwork, and particularly, to make sure they have enough time to write the thing up.

He also noted that

> ...this kind of project will generate a lot more information and possibility for analysis than many other kinds of projects. And so to really get your money's worth out of it, you ought to fund a lot of analysis. You can get additional analysis from what you originally contemplated, because the data is going to be there. In other words, it's a cost-benefit from the government's point of view, if you follow up on what's been done, because you end up with a lot of data which could be analyzed and provide the government with a lot of input without having to fund another field project.

He concluded by saying, "So, encourage additional analysis, but be willing to pay for it."

Another researcher pointed out that government officers should realize that they are getting much richer data, and that this can be used to evaluate the quantitative data they're getting from other studies, so that they know what the quantitative studies are telling them and not telling them. He suggested that project officers encourage researchers to turn out papers regularly, that this would be good for the officer, who would know what was going on, and good for the researchers, who would be encouraged to organize their data, and also make the writing of their final reports easier.

23. Ethical, Political and Practical Problems

As one informant noted, ethnographers are in the field for a comparatively long period of time, interacting, observing, prying. As a result, the problems generated by the research process tend to differ from those of more quantitative and less interactive methods (Cassell 1978). For example, in ethnography, the concept of informed consent is less a matter of a signed consent form, or a brief lecture by researchers to their passive "subjects" and more a negotiated, and continually renegotiated *process*, as those who study, and those who are studied learn more about each other, their ideas, goals, and styles of interaction.

24. Deception

Deception, too, differs in ethnographic research. For one thing, it's harder. As one researcher put it, when I asked if he had ever lied: "No, no necessity. You'd be immediately caught." It is easier for researchers administering questionnaires or performing laboratory experiments, to deceive subjects about what they are looking for or doing, than when fieldworkers and informants interact over a period of time. I am not saying that deception is impossible in fieldwork, only that it takes more effort—and perhaps, skill.

When asked whether they had ever lied or indirectly deceived people while doing research, all the researchers said that they had not lied, at least, not seriously. "I might have led someone to think that they were more interesting than I might have really thought they were in order to get into their classroom," said one, and another said, "No big lies, just a lot of small social lies to maintain good relations." He continued: "I tended not so much to lie as to avoid things, to be vague, to change the subject, if possible, and say I wasn't sure of something." Another, described a situation which is common in fieldwork: when an ethnographer is accepted by those being studied, they frequently forget, or behave as though they have forgotten, just what is being studied, or that the ethnographer is studying them at all. At this point, some researchers have neglected to remind people of their role. A related problem is when informants are, or become, friends. One researcher socialized with the people he was studying: they were, he said, part of his "old boy network." He had some qualms when school matters were discussed during these social occasions, and wondered whether his friends knew he was not only socializing but also collecting data—especially since he was not taking field notes. Here is where the steno pad, mentioned by one informant, kept open at all times, with pencil ready, serves as an announcement that nothing is off the record. This is not difficult in a school, or outside of school with people one does not know very well, but there are some social occasions where a notepad is, or is felt to be, inappropriate.

Let me return to another aspect of this question, to the informant who noted that when people told him something confidential, and said "don't write this down," he did not—until later. His reasoning was that if people tell a researcher something, they want it known, and what should really be confidential is *who* said it. (Another researcher took the opposite tack, saying: "they'd tell it to me, and it's with me, and it colors my interpretation, but I didn't write it down because I thought I should respect their wishes about it.") There are no easy answers as to whether or not to remind "friends" that one is listening and remembering social conversation, or whether or not to write down information that one has been offered but been asked not to record. Ethnography lacks the fine distinctions of journalism in this respect: when an informant tells a journalist that something is "off the record," it means that the *source* of the information should not be revealed; when something is presented as "deep background," the *information itself* should not be reported. (But then, informants know the next day whether or not journalists have followed their instructions, and can chastise those who have not by withholding information the next time; ethnographer's reports, on the other hand, are generally issued some time after the research is completed, so that informants have less control over those who violate confidences.) The issue of confidentiality, which is a vital one in fieldwork, will be discussed in a later section.

One informant, who said he did not remember lying or indirectly deceiving people in any serious fashion, had, in fact, placed a fradulent "student" in a class for an entire semester. When reminded of this, he said that the teachers knew, but to the extent they did not know, the other students had been deceived.

Interestingly, two bogus students were placed in

classrooms, at two different sites. But, at site A, the "student" told others who he really was (a graduate student of education). Said one of his colleagues, "Well, he was kind of pretending he was a student, but he told people, and he was pretending that he was pretending." That complex phrase sums up certain aspects of participant observation.

Teachers at site B were told that the fradulent student was in fact a graduate student. But students were not. He sat in on an entire semester of 9th Grade English, posing as a 12th grader who needed to make up a class in order to graduate, and also sat in on a 10th grade homeroom. Although he received suspicious glances, and one student insisted on taking him down to the 12th grade office to check whether he was really enrolled in the school (he managed to bluff his way out of the situation), he seems to have been accepted by the majority of students, and he managed to observe a great deal of interesting and illicit behavior. This informant expressed serious reservations about his undercover role, however, and about the data he gathered. He said:

> ...even to this day, I feel that it was an unethical thing to do, because I told the kids outright lies, and that's what disturbed me...my understanding of participant observation is that you try to leave the environment as unchanged as possible, and I did not do that. I mean, I had an impact on the environment. I changed the gestalt of the classroom. And that bothered me. I mean that, you know, my observations were tainted, because not only did I have to deal with my bias but I had affected the environment, which affects behavior and affects your observations.... For example, in 10th grade homeroom, I wanted to get information from these kids so I would start up a conversation about things. "Okay, have you ever seen this movie?" Now I don't know if the kids would ever discuss things like that in the way that I started discussing them. You know, kids don't ask questions like that, "what did you think about Star Wars?" I did.

I asked him when he thought he would have found out if he had gone into the classroom as himself, "John Smith" graduate student, rather than the fraudulent "John Smith" 12th grader. He said:

> ...the way I felt was that I had to be very careful about what I said. I couldn't let too much of John Smith, graduate student, come into John Smith, student, or else I (1) would have been discovered, so to speak; and, (2) really sound too intelligent for the situation I was in. That really concerned me, and what that caused me to do was to keep my mouth shut, and that is the one thing I didn't want to do, because I'm an outgoing person, and I can relate, and I have related in many instances very well with kids...I was uptight, and that may have been some of the problem. I was very uptight about my [fradulent] role there, and it's perhaps because of my feeling of being uncomfortable that I didn't get as much information as I felt I could have; but I really feel that the real person [John Smith, graduate student] could have gotten more...I felt that I could have asked probing questions in such a way I could have gotten certain information...I was getting close with a couple of kids, and I felt I could have gotten more from these kids if I had been the real me. They were a bit closemouthed with me, you know, because I wasn't quite open enough with them. I would have gone *wild* in the classroom [as the real, extremely gregarious John Smith]...

He said of the data he gathered: "It's tainted, it's not good because of it [the deception]. It isn't just not good, morally good, it's not technically good."

25. Other Problems

Researchers in the field frequently are unable to stop and think through a course of action, they must do whatever seems to be the most logical, or least harmful thing to do at that moment. But afterwards, fieldworkers may realize that they were, in fact, in a very tight or ambiguous situation, and they may go over the events in their minds, wondering whether they did the right thing.

Ticklish situations

I asked researchers several questions designed to elicit the way they responded to difficult or morally ambiguous situations (See Appendix F for the questionnaire schedule I used).

One team described an occurrence where a student had been accidentally killed at a school with a reputation for violence, and the police were investigating to make sure the death was accidental. The fieldworkers had been interviewing students at this time, and they were worried that their field notes, which contained information about this incident and others, would be subpoenaed. Said one team member:

> ...the police came in and gave a lie detector test and stuff like that, and we were afraid that our data would be subpoenaed; however, it was not. We were very clever. We took all our stuff to Canada. We were all set to slug it out on First Amendment, but we didn't have a chance to do that.

The researcher continued:

> ...the other thing that's intriguing about that, is when it came up, we, of course, immediately thought to get in touch with our professional association, the august [name of association]. We were convinced that these folks had, you know, the leaders in our discipline and our professional mentors—really thought through this issue and could give us some direction, in terms of how to respond. And, you know, we called up the president of the association, and a whole bunch of so-called "heavies," all of whom seemed to us to have thought less about the problem than we had, which was an alarming realization. I mean, it became very clear that nobody knew much what to do, and that if the situation arose, we were going to be pretty much on our own.

Another researcher said that her team had decided ahead of time that in case of an attempt to subpoena the data, the research notes would immediately be burned.

The graduate student, who posed as a 9th-grader, described how another 9th-grader had invited him to "meet these two girlfriends of his, to go out in the parking lot and smoke some dope and make passionate love to these two girls." He said, "I was even introduced to the two girls. Thank God it was the end of the semester, or I would have been in trouble, because there was a lot of peer pressure, social pressure put on me to do this and, I mean you know, I was married, and had all those ethics that go along with marriage." Because it was the end of the semester, the informant was able to decline the invitation without ruining his reputation or blowing his cover.

Another informant, a social psychologist, who worked very hard at being "non-reactive" described how a black student, with whom he had previously had difficulties, had come rushing past him in the cafeteria one day, pursued by a young white gym teacher, who asked, "Who is he? Do you know his name?" The student-researcher replied, "I don't think I should tell you." He reported that things went downhill with that teacher from there on: she got indignant and stormed out, while the student grinned at him, delightedly. The researcher felt very bad about this and went to the teacher and explained what

he was doing and why. But it did not really make things better because the teacher was concerned that she had been made to look a fool.

When asked if they had ever done something they had been sorry about afterwards, several informants seemed to agree with the researcher who said: "My regrets on this study don't have to do with what I said or didn't say. What I regret is that there were some key interviews I wish I had gotten. There were some areas I wish I could have covered."

Broken promises

When asked whether they had ever made any promises they could not keep, researchers generally mentioned incidents related to promising a copy of their final report to someone—which I will deal with in a later section on feedback—or projects, such as helping community members write a grant proposal, which they still hoped to complete. One researcher, however, noted that "the biggest promise was really more an implicit promise, that we wouldn't get anyone into trouble from the study. And we didn't, individually. But the fact that we studied the school did create a hassle for the school and for the principal."

Political squeeze

Researchers reported a number of varied political situations where they were caught in the middle. Several mentioned factionalism between the white old guard and the new black teachers, although no one seems to have been involved in an open confrontation. One fieldworker said that he was always very aware of this problem, since he ahd done research on an American Indian reservation, and that he has always been very careful "to walk the center line, the neutral line."

One team said that they were sorry they had studied only one school. In the community, there were two that were traditional rivals, and the researchers happened to study the school which had received more unfavorable newspaper publicity. They had evidence that the situation in both schools is similar, but the fact that they studied only one, and that people in the community know which school was studied, puts their school and its personnel at risk, since many of the problems they discovered and discussed in their report can then be interpreted as those of the school, rather than the district. They did their research in a highly politicized situation, where local officials are looking for a scapegoat, and they worry that their report might endanger the school. In retrospect, it became apparent that they did not even have to *study* both schools, they just had to place researchers in each, so that the research findings could not be attributed to a single school.

Another researcher described a situation where a clinical psychologist came into the school and gave a mini-course on racism. He was not well liked at all, because of his role, and also because of the way he filled the role. The teachers perceived him as a threat and were very antagonistic to him. The researcher noticed that while the clinical psychologist was in the school, people's attitudes toward the investigator seemed to change: attendance bulletins, which had been regularly supplied by one teacher, suddenly stopped coming to him; and people behaved differently, they were less "forthcoming." And he realized that people at the school were associating him—he was a social psychologist—with the clinical psychologist. Meanwhile, the clinical psychologist was very interested, and tried to make friends. Finally, the researcher told the clinical psychologist that he was a consultant and the informant, a researcher, that it was important that people not confuse their consulting and research roles. The researcher told the clinical psychologist that he did not want to associate with him at the school, although he could come visit the researcher at his university, if he wished. After the researcher stopped associating with the clinical psychologist, and made a clear effort to break with him, and to indicate in conversations that they were not associated, and that he knew nothing of the clinical psychologist's work, or whereabouts, the absence bulletins started coming in again, and people started being more welcoming and open again.

One team described how a colleague of one of the researchers had placed several fieldwork students in the study school. They discovered that these students were untrained, and one was rude to some school personnel, and when reprimanded by the researcher, complained to the university administration. Another professor, who also placed students in the research site, refused to show the investigators the data, claiming that he had to "protect the fieldwork." A student researcher reported that the second professor, who was head of the university department, where one of the researchers taught, also tried to hire away some of the project's fieldworkers. Both researchers cautioned about allowing untrained people into the research site, and one said: "It will be a cold day in Hell before I let that man do anything like that again!"

One informant described a political squeeze which he characterized as "kind of funny, not horrendous." He had been sponsored to join a prestigious interracial luncheon group in the study city, whose membership and social functions were all male, except for the annual picnic, when wives and girlfriends were invited. There was agitation to allow women into the group, and it finally came to a vote. The researcher tried to maintain neutrality, since he felt he was there primarily as an observer—he was not even a member of that community. There was a snowstorm the day the vote took place, and the meeting site was changed, and some of the staunch anti-women people were not there. It came down to a vote, and there were nine people in attendance, and there was a four-to-four vote. The researcher tried not to raise his hand one way or another, but somebody asked "have you voted?" and he had to cast the deciding vote, and women got it. He laughed and said, "I couldn't get out of it. I was a member of the group!"

26. Confidentiality

Many ethical issues, such as informed consent, are less immediate in the ongoing ethnographic situation, where consent is continually renegotiated and relationships alter over time. It is precisely the time span and depth and breadth of relationships, however, which make other issues, such as confidentiality, far more serious in ethnography than in quantitative research. As fieldworkers become accepted, and begin to melt into the scenery, they are able to observe "backstage" behaviors, which can be concealed during people's comparatively brief interactions with quantitative researchers. As one informant noted, fieldworkers learn people's secrets. What then does a researcher to do with these secrets? Although many of these secrets are germane to the issues being investigated, revelation may damage those studied. How then can researchers present a complete or adequate picture of what was investigated, without revealing who was studied, and what illegal, prohibited or frowned-upon behaviors they indulge in on occasion?

All the investigators changed the name of the schools they studied, in their research reports and tried to disguise them as much as possible. Every student and teacher had pseudonyms, and sex and race and grade-level were changed, when unimportant to the examples cited. Circumstances were altered, so that the sense of an event was retained, while identifying details were shifted or suppressed. The principal was on occasion referred to as a teacher, sometimes a female teacher. But this was not always possible, and all the teams mentioned difficulties because the principals were "way out there in front," as one researcher put it. Some researchers did not discuss illegal behavior by students, while others mentioned that illicit activities went on, but did not describe which person did what. One team wrote a rather generalized, theoretical report, despite the fact that they had a great deal of detailed ethnographic data: "...It's a small town," explained a team member, and "People knew who I was, really, and what school I was studying." She said that the fact that the school and the students were so identifiable was always hanging over her head. Some days, she said, she would walk home from the school, or take the bus, and it would be hanging over her head: "Can I publish this?" She said she felt a great deal of trepidation during the study, about what she wrote and what she was going to write, and had never felt such a high level of anxiety during previous fieldwork. Here she was, a white, trying to do an unbiased study of what was really a very sore spot in that particular town—desegregation was one of the most difficult experiences the town had had recently. "And they are still going through it," she said, "everyone is going through it; every middle class parent on this campus is going through it, facing the problem right now." (She, and several other professors at the university, had children in the desegregated public schools.)

Some researchers mentioned that they had to make particular efforts not to discuss things they had learned about one person or group with others at the school. One informant said that when someone asked her for information, she said, "I don't know," which perhaps was an untruth, but she figured that she only knew people's points of view about what happened, anyhow, and this was a way of keeping confidentiality.

There was another way of handling data that might be perceived as damaging to individuals, or groups, which I believe is quite common in ethnography. The fieldworker has, or develops, a particular sympathy for those who are studied: they become, in a very special sense, "my people." The fieldworker "takes the position of the other" to understand why particular beliefs and behaviors prevail; as a result, actions which the researcher might censure if they were performed in another context or by another group, appear quite explicable and even justified. Thus, those who study a social movement, as I have done, find

that violent protests, or extreme rhetoric become reasonable, when the context is understood—and understanding the context is one of the tasks of the ethnographers. As a result, behaviors come to be redefined, so that the label given to them by the larger society becomes erroneous or meaningless—what is important is the understandings of the actor, and of the sympathetic ethnographer. Let me give a few examples in the school situation: I asked one researcher whether he had observed any illicit activities, and he said no. I then inquired about extortion, which was mentioned fleetingly in his team's report. The fieldworker explained that (a) extortion did not occur in classrooms, which is where the team did their principal observation; (b) acts like extortion were performed by strangers in the school, people the students did not know; and (c) behaviors that may have looked like extortion to another child, such as a student coming up and asking for an object in a demanding tone of voice, were probably misperceived, because of stylistic differences between the races. Another researcher noted that she preferred the term "irregular economy" to "illicit behavior" to describe activities such as drug dealing, or theft, since they were really alternative economic options for poor youths, to whom regular channels of employment and social mobility were closed. A third informant described how his team's initial report contained a chart on fighting activities, which turned out to be nine times higher for black than white students. He said he worried about releasing this information, but then decided that this was a problem educators would have to face, and if the study were to be helpful, such information should be put in. But then, he started thinking about the white students' strategies of behavior, which he might not have considered, had it not been necessary to think so hard about the black behavior, and he realized that the white students also had their strategies. When the blacks were aggressive, the white students had strategies of withdrawal, of ignoring aggression. The researcher explained that he tried to balance the negative behaviors of one group against the negative behaviors of the other.

In each of these cases, actions which might be considered potentially damaging, if revealed, were redefined so that they were no longer discreditable. This redefinition of behaviors is of course related to a value position on the part of the researcher, which can exist before research begins, influencing the choice of research problem, or may develop during the course of fieldwork. As was previously noted, all of the researchers appeared to be strongly in favor of desegregation.

27. Feedback of Research Results

We now come to the question of whether ethnographers owe an accounting to those who were studied. Classically, anthropologists studied isolated and non-literate peoples so separated by space, travel, time and social distance that the issue did not arise. Today, however, many groups have become concerned about ethnographers who study them, and who then return to the academy, where they use the data for personal and professional advancement, without enabling those who were studied to benefit from their findings. This issue raises a host of ethical, political and procedural problems. For example, many, perhaps most, groups are not entirely unified: they contain factions, with varying goals and points of view. When one faction approves of an idea, or an investigator, or a research study, then the other, may in consequence disapprove. Fieldworkers frequently become identified with a particular faction, and as a result their work is unacceptable to other factions. In addition, individuals who appoint themselves "spokespersons" are frequently unrepresentative of the majority of those for whom they claim to speak, and their approval (or disapproval) may have little to do with the views of others. Leaders, too—whether they be school principals, corporations presidents, union officials or village headmen—may have different interests than their followers, and their encouragement and approval may have little relation to the opinions of others (except when a leader's approval means that certain followers will automatically *not* approve). I am talking as though showing one's work to those who are studied is equivalent to asking for approval of that work. Perhaps it is not. But if the people studied do not approve, it may be difficult, even impossible, for subsequent investigators to gain entrée: the researchers have then "damaged the field site."

There are three principles of ethnographic research involved: (1) researchers should behave so that they do not close out opportunities for subsequent study by others; (2) fieldworkers owe something to those who were generous with time and information, without whose aid the study could not have been conducted; and (3) those who were studied should be able to benefit from the research findings. (Although related, the last two principles are not identical.) The requirements of these principles can conflict on occasion—or at least, the way the requirements are interpreted by researchers and those who are studied.

People's reactions to feedback can be troublesome in all ethnographic research. These reactions are particularly problematic, however, in highly politicized and emotion-laden situations—and there are few issues more politicized or sensitive than school desegregation, dealing as it does with race-relations and the welfare of people's children. The problem of feedback of research results came up time and again during my interviews with the teams who studied desegregated schools. It is an issue that is more pressing in ethnographic research than in other enterprises which take up less time, and depend less upon the long-term cooperation of those who are studied. There was a certain Lady-or-the-Tiger quality to some of the discussions, as though there were no real solution to the dilemma posed by the conflicting principles: every solution had certain costs and appeared to violate certain ethical or professional principles. I cannot provide solutions: I can only outline the ramifications of the dilemmas involved and present solutions arrived at by various research teams.

I have data on this from four teams (the principal investigator of one team did not wish to be interviewed, and another team had not yet completed the final research report). Two teams showed the report to everyone at the school who wished to read it. Of these, members of one team believed that this action had damaged the research site, making it impossible for subsequent researchers to study the school ("We revealed people's secrets," said one, "and people didn't like

that.") Members of the second team believed that future ethnographers could study their school, although one researcher noted that the fact that they gave feedback would make it more difficult for the next investigator. The second team gave a preliminary unabridged version of their report to the school superintendent for distribution to the school board, and because the report was so long, they sent several of the most relevant chapters to the school. These caused a great deal of controversy and distress. One chapter, in particular, which dealt with ambiguous incidents between students and teachers, which might or might not be interpreted as racist, seemed to stimulate people at the school to make more extreme statements (anti-black, anti-white, racist, anti-racist) than they had previously. The researchers said that teachers' reactions confirmed the hypotheses presented in that chapter. "We gave incidents of misperception," said one researcher, "And these incidents were misperceived, which shows that these misperceptions were going on." Many of the teachers said, of the ambiguous incidents presented, "How can you claim this incident is racist?" The researchers had not so claimed. On the other hand, many of the people who received the manuscript for the National Institute of Education said, "How can you claim this incident is *not* racist?" One researcher noted that this particular chapter was like a projective test, evoking strong emotions and demonstrating the validity of the incidents presented. He said:

> The feedback that we got on the draft and final report was invaluable. As I said, it was a controversy that developed over the presence of certain incidents that were described. A couple of teachers got upset, and that had a ripple effect throughout the school. And the principal, as a result of this, went over the entire thing, page by page—it was 500 pages long. There was some information that was lacking, there were some slightly erroneous points...so he went over that with a fine-toothed comb. And, I mean, it wasn't all critical. Part of it was very useful. The perceptions that people had were just invaluable. I mean, I'm not really sure, after going through that, how people do fieldwork without getting that kind of feedback, because it forces you to deal with the perspective that people have in the situation....it confirmed the analysis and it filled out parts of it. There were aspects that it forced me to recognize that I had not really thought about before...So I consider it to be, as I said, traumatic, but very productive.

The researcher continued:

> ...I'm still debating in my mind as to the strain that I put on the people in the school by doing that. I mean, it definitely put a strain on them. It cost them something to read that...We could have presented it better, so that it might have had less disruptive force to it. What happened was that they got focused on one chapter, and that, then colored their interpretation of the rest.

Both researchers thought, in retrospect, that certain aspects of the feedback might have been handled better. For one thing, the entire report, rather than chapters, could have been presented, so that people got a more balanced view of the research findings. In addition, team members wished they could have arranged some preliminary discussions with the teachers about how the data were presented, and what it meant, and why certain parts were included and others excluded. The researchers were very short of time; they were scheduled part-time on the project, and had spent thirteen hours a day, for a month-and-a-half doing nothing but work on their report. As a result, when the report was completed, they had other tasks waiting, classes to teach, committees, correspondence, and so forth, and were unable to be at the school, to answer teacher's questions, and discuss issues as they came up. "That should have been worked out differently," said one researcher, "had we a different schedule, and somewhat more resources."

One team promised to show their research report to teachers and administrators. The school administrators were given a copy, and they told the researchers they would decide the form in which the findings should be presented to the teachers. Six months later, the researchers had heard nothing from the administrators, and suspected they would not hear from them in the future. The research city, and site, were highly politicized, and it was possible that the report, if released, would stir up serious trouble for the administrators and everyone else in the school. One researcher was particularly distressed by the situation: He said: "We never thought they wouldn't want to know. We were so worried about them asking us before we were ready. It never entered our minds that they wouldn't want to hear the results, that they [the results] would be so threatening that they wouldn't even care. Which is the position we're in." He said that he thought that if researchers ask for people's time, they owe them something—at least some kind of a general accounting. I said, "So that's something that

distresses you," and he answered, "It bugs me." Then he laughed and said, "I'd be more distressed if they do it [show the report]...but I don't feel professionally clean—for my own professional ethics." This researcher apparently realized that showing the report might cause serious difficulties for everyone concerned; he felt, however, that he had broken a promise, and violated both the principle of reciprocity and that of enabling those who are studied to benefit from the research results. Unfortunately, in this situation, showing the research results might *harm* rather than benefit those studied and, as a result, the researcher had conflicting emotions about the issue of feedback.

One team showed their preliminary report to the school principal, who liked it. The report, however, was not promised nor shown to teachers. A team member described how he discussed the project whenever anyone wanted to, and how, at various times during the fieldwork, he went to the teachers with pieces of research he thought might interest them—such as portions of student interviews. He also scheduled meeting to talk to teachers, and gave them papers. He reported that the teachers who attended these meetings, and most of the teachers who were studied did so, got a better idea of what the project was about. He reported that he gave teachers papers about the research, when and if anyone wanted to see them, but noted that, *of course, he chose those papers very carefully*. When asked whether another fieldworker could study the school, if this team's research report were published, the investigator said that the principal would allow it, but he thought another researcher would have trouble getting cooperation from the teachers if they saw his team's report.

I have described various strategies, and various results of these strategies. One team showed the report, and believed that this feedback helped close the door to future research in their school. Another showed their report and, despite a great deal of distress, believed the feedback was helpful to their research and would not hinder a future investigation. A third team gave the report to administrators, who kept it from the teachers; they believed another researcher would not get cooperation from teachers, because investigators had not kept their promise to teachers of feedback and research results. A fourth team showed the report to the princpal, and gave teachers carefully selected portions of their findings; this team believed that a future researcher could study their school, if teachers did not gain access to their report. I find it difficult to deduce any principles of behavior from these examples, save for the universal, but possibly trite, observation that every course of behavior has its benefits and costs. Researchers must make their own decisions, and pay the price. If, however, these decisions are made carefully, and consciously, before fieldwork begins, investigators can avoid making promises that they later are forced to break or have difficulty in keeping.

28. Are Desegregated Schools Different?

When asked whether studying a desegregated or mixed-race school differed from studying an "ordinary" school, researchers split almost evenly. Interestingly, members of the same research team expressed opposing views, which suggests that the design of a particular study did not affect responses to this question.

One researcher said that studying a desegregated school was more complicated but not significantly different. Another, with similar views, said that one knows that race is one of the things one will have to take account of, but in another school it might be that another factor is equally significant; for example, researchers might study a school which was polarized along ethnic or religious lines. One investigator noted that she had been associated with studies of several schools and, despite the fact that the others were not desegregated, researchers found problems in each. The response of one informant to the question was:

> No, not really. One of our problems is that we mix up class and race. I'm sure the same thing was going on in that school ten years go, before they had desegregation. The blue collar kids were *in* that school but not *of* that school. Here, everything gets mixed up with black and white.

When I noted that it was not only in her study city that everything got mixed up with black and white, she replied that one of the advantages of a cross-site study, such as the one on desegregated schools, was being able to compare the situation in various cities.

Among those who believed that studying a desegregated school is different, one investigator noted that the race of the local community, of students and of the administration affect the likelihood of getting good data from different groups and that, in addition, the race of the principal investigators puts a significant bias into the information. He pointed out that a desegregated school feels threatened, and as a result, outside researchers may find themselves in a more tenuous situation than if they were studying an "ordinary" school. Another said that the way we treat people in our society is affected by race more than by class, and because people believe race is important, it affects research. Another informant noted that his team investigated the knowledge and lack of knowledge shown by black and white students and teachers about the beliefs, behaviors and interaction styles of the other group. Cultural differences caused differential understandings on the part of students and teachers, said the researcher, and these misunderstandings distinguish a desegregated school from one that is all black or all white.

29. New Research

Believing that the understanding gained from qualitative research can help investigators design more relevant quantitative inquiries, I asked members of the six research teams what questions they would ask if surveying desegregated or mixed-race schools. One informant stated that he would not conduct such a survey. He said he would not trust a survey of desegregated schools alone, noting that we do not know what "normal" is, having no baseline to compare studies to; he believed that all schools should be surveyed.

Two researchers said they would start by questioning students. One wanted to ask students to list the most important problems they faced at school, and say what they would like changed; while the other wished to ask if students were at all surprised by their experiences at school and, if so, how. The researcher noted that students were not surprised by what happened at her school, and that was precisely the problem. She also stated that she would concentrate on where students want to end up, and how they think what they do in school is related to this: "that may be the hook by which to catch the learner!" she said. Both informants also wished to question teachers: one wanted to ask teachers about the problems they face in desegregated schools and what they thought would help them handle these problems; the other, wanted to ask how much time, out of each classroom segment of thirty to fifty minutes, a teacher spent in actual teaching, as opposed to activities such as control.

Two researchers wanted to investigate the opportunities schools give students and teachers to understand cultural differences between races. One had specific questions, such as: do teachers consider it part of their job to teach students about differences; how do teachers deal with these differences when they come up as an issue in school; are blacks and whites portrayed together on bulletin boards, in textbooks, etc. The other, was interested in cross-cultural and cross-race interaction patterns, and thought that sociometric inquiry might provide data on this.

One informant, who agreed with Ogbu (1974), that employment opportunities determine the behavior of many students in school, was starting to work on a survey of the labor market and changing opportunities for working class youths.

One researcher said he would survey individual schools, to discover the achievement patterns—who is achieving at what level—and friendship patterns—who is friends with whom. He would investigate the composition of the safety patrol, the student government, the classrooms and ability grouping. He said that if none of these were predictable by race or ethnicity, then one would have a minimum indication that the school was not racist.

When asked about what sort of fieldwork they might like to conduct in their study school or one like it, three researchers indicated that their primary focus might no longer be on schools. One was interested in doing an ethnography of an entire city, with the school study seen as a segment of the larger project. Another wished to investigate the way the greater environment affects schools; he said he would like to examine the study city and, in particular, the way the policies of the city's largest employer affects local politics. A third, was also interested in political issues; he said he would like to study the political process at the level of the Board of Education in his city, since this is where the future of the study school is really determined.

Two researchers wished to look for effective ways to deal with racial issues in desegregated schools. One wanted to locate and study particular techniques which seemed to be helpful—for example, in the study school, a few teachers held "rap sessions" where black and white students could discuss what was bothering them. The second, was interested in planned intervention, in exploring various activities with mixed race student groups to see whether these might have a positive effect upon friendship and

interaction patterns.

In one school, where there had been a shift from a policy which consciously promoted integration to one which, the researcher believed, would encourage informal segregation, the researcher was anxious to follow the changes in the school occurring under the new policy.

Although he had tried, however, he had been unable to get such a study funded by the National Institute of Education.

One fieldworker was interested in non-verbal patterns of interaction among and between racial and ethnic groups; he hoped to use videotape to study characteristics such as body rhythm and verbal inflection to "find out why people divide themselves up the way they do."

It is hoped that some of these issues and others will be addressed by new researchers. Clifford Geertz's observation about interpretive anthropology can be fruitfully applied to the ethnography of desegregated schools: it is "a science whose progress is marked less by a perfection of consensus than by a refinement of debate" (1973:29). Ethnographic research does not come up with easy or simplistic answers. It can, however, deepen understanding and help refine the questions asked.

Appendix

Appendix A

Questionnaire schedules developed by Dr. Janet Schofield, Department of Psychology, University of Pittsburgh for administration to students in desegregated urban schools.

QUESTIONS FOR STUDENT INTERVIEW II

1. What do you like best about _____?
2. If you could change one thing about _____, what would it be?
3. If you could change one thing about the students here, what would it be?
4. Are there certain boys (girls) at _____ that others are *especially likely* to want as a friend?
5. What makes these boys (girls) so popular?
6. Are there certain boys (girls) at _____ that others are *especially likely* to want to work with in class?
7. What makes these boys (girls) so popular?
8. When you have lunch here at _____, how do you decide where to sit?
9. Do you generally sit across from or beside the others you want to be with for lunch?
10. I've noticed that in the lunchroom, girls tend to sit with girls and boys tend to sit with boys. Why do you think that happens?
11. I've also noticed that in the lunchroom white (black) kids tend to sit next to other white (black) kids and black (white) kids tend to sit next to other black (white) kids. Why do you think that happens?
12. Now I'd like to talk for a few minutes about clubs in the sixth grade House, like the Mice (Dogs) and the Dogs (Mice). What sort of clubs are they?
13. What other groups like the Mice (Dogs) or the Dogs (Mice) can you think of?
14. About when did these groups get started here at _____?
15. Which do you think was the first to start?
16. Why do you think these groups start?

Note to the interviewer: Get the following information about each of the groups the child has mentioned as well as about the Mice and the Dogs. Ask first about the Mice (Dogs), then about other groups.

17. a. About how many members do the _____ have?
18. b. How do you become a member of the _____.?
19. c. Are there any special clothes students wear as a mark of belonging to the _____?
20. d. Are there any special things that students who belong to the _____ do? (Probe: Well for example, do they have meetings or do they have a special handshake or something like that?)
21. Now can you think of a club that has boys and girls in it? (Find out the sexual composition of each club).
22. Now can you think of a club that has both black and white students in it? (Find out the racial composition of each club).
23. You know I've heard some kids talk about being intimidated by other kids, you know being threatened or pushed around. Do you think there is much of that here?

24. Please look at this card. As you can see the numbers go from 0-15. Look at the labels then choose the number that comes closest to describing the situation here. You can choose numbers between the labels like 3 or 12 if you want to.
25. Have you personally ever experienced intimidation here?
If Yes: Get a complete description of the circumstances including where, when, what, and who (including sex and race of intimidation). If the child says it happens frequently to him ask for a description of the most recent incident.
26. Do you think there is much *fighting* at _____?
27. Please look at this card. You can see it is like the last one. The numbers go from 0-15. Look at the labels then choose the number that comes closest to describing the situation here, don't forget that you can choose numbers in between the labels if you want.
28. How do fights usually start? Where? What happens then?
29. You know, the other day I heard a sixth grade student describing a student from the seventh grade House to a teacher who needed to find (him, her). Neither the teacher nor the student knew the name of the person they were trying to locate. The student said this seventh grader was tall, thin, had dark hair and also described what the other student was wearing. But he (she) didn't say whether the (boy, girl) was black or white. Why do you think he (she) didn't mention whether the student was white or black? (Please probe this fully).
30. If you had been in the situation just described do you think you would have acted the same or different? Why?
31. How do you think the teacher would have reacted if the student said whether the seventh grader was white or black?
32. Now imagine that in the situation we've been discussing, the student had been talking to a friend instead of to a teacher. Do you think he would have mentioned the other student's race then or not? Why?
33. Now when you talk with kids who are white (black) do you ever mention that someone is white or black? What about when you are talking with kids who are black (white)?
34. What about you? Would you have done that or not? Why?
35. How do you feel about coming to _____?
36. How good a school do you think _____ is?
37. How friendly do you think the students here are?
38. How well behaved to you think the students here are?
39. a. How well do you think students get along with each other?
b. Some people say that black and white kids in schools like _____ get to know each other real quickly and easily. Others say that this isn't always so. What do you think? Any change over time?
40. How often do you think kids feel afraid of other kids here?
41. How often do you think kids here make fun of the way others look or talk?
42. How often do kids here ignore or reject someone who is trying to be friends with them?
43. How hard is it to get good grades here?
44. Now I'd like you to think about how _____ compares with the school you went to last year. If you were going to rate how _____ compares to your old school which number would you pick?
45. How do you think the teachers at _____ compare with those at your old school?
46. How friendly are the kids at _____ compared with those at your old school?
47. How well behaved are the kids at _____ compared with those at your old school?
48. How well do students at _____ get along with each other compared with those at your old school?
49. How hard is it to get good grades at _____ compared with those at your old school?
50. What would you say about how much pride students take in being part of the school here compared to your old school?

QUESTIONS FOR INTERVIEW 5
(May, June, 1977)
Sixth Grade Class of 1979

1. Are you glad you are a student at _____ or would you rather be somewhere else?
2. Did you want to come to _____ or did you feel like you were forced to come here? If says "forced", ask "Who forced you? Was it fair or not?"
3. If you could change one thing about the students here what would that be?
   (Note to interviewer: Explain cards using end points and 3 or 3.)
4. How do you feel about coming to _____?
5. Now think about how _____ compares to the school that you went to last year. If you were going to rate how _____ compares with your old school, which number would you pick?
7. How do you think the teachers at _____ compare with the teachers at your old school?
8. How friendly do you think students at _____ are compared to your old school?
9. How well-behaved do you think students at _____ are compared to your old school?
10. How well do the students at _____ get along with each other compared to your old school?
11. How often do you think kids feel scared or afraid compared to your old school?
12. How hard do students work at _____ compared to your old school?
13. What would you say about how hard it is to get good grades at _____ compared to your old school?
14. What would you say about how much pride students take in being part of the school here compared to your old school?

Now I'd like to get your ideas on discipline here at _____

15. What does somebody have to do in order to get suspended here?
16. Do you think teachers discipline all students the same way?
17. Are the teachers harder on certain types of students than others?
    If Yes—What types of students are the teachers tougher on? (If difficulty getting a reply, ask, Well, do you think boys and girls are treated equally?" Next ask, "Well, do you think black and white students are treated equally?")
18. Do you think the dean disciplines all students the same way?
19. Are the deans harder on certain types of children than others?
    If Yes—What types of students is the dean tougher on? (If difficulty getting a reply, ask "Well, do you think boys and girls are treated equally?" Next ask, "Well, do you think black and white students are treated equally?")
20. There are about 600 students in the sixth grade house. Now of these 600 students how many do you think have been suspended at least once this year?
21. Now think of these _____ students. How many do you think are boys (girls)? (Use same sex.)

    (Note to Interviewer: Try to get specific numbers, percents, or fractions rather than answers like "a lot.")

22. How many do you think are black (white) (use same race)?
23. How many students do you think have been suspended three or more times?
24. Now think of these _____ students. How many do you think are boys (girls)?
25. How many do you think are black (white)?

    (Note to Interviewer: Look at student's responses to the above question. If the student has suggested that there are sexual or racial differences in suspension rates, ask student for his or her thoughts on why this happens. For example, say, "I see that you think boys are (a little, a lot, etc.) more likely to be suspended than girls. Why do you think this is?")

26. a. One thing that we've noticed at _____ is that in some situations people are more likely than in others to say whether someone else is black or white. For example, sometimes when students describe someone they'll say, Well, (s)he's short and thin and other times they might say (s)he's (black, white), short and thin. (Use opposite race.)

Now imagine that you are describing a new friend to someone else. Your friend Beverly (John) (use same sex) is white (black) (use opposite race). What are the chances that you would mention that Beverly (John) was white (black) if you were describing him or her to:

Your parents (Card A)
A white teacher
A black teacher
A white student who is a good friend
A black student who is a good friend
A white student who you don't know too well
A black student who you don't know too well

26. b. Now imagine that you are describing somebody who had threatened to get you after school to another person. The person who threatened to get you is black (white). What are the chances that you would say that Beverly (John) was white (black) if you were describing her (him) to:

(Note: Use same categories as above in question 26 a.)

(Note to Interviewer: Look for patterns such as: any difference between responses about the friend and threatening student; any difference between talking to like race and other people; any difference between talking to a friend, teacher, etc. If you see any patterns, note them and inquire why the student responds as he or she does.)

27. There are about 600 kids in the sixth grade. Of these 600, how many do you think are girls (boys)?
28. How many do you think are black (white) (use same race)?
29. Do you ever wish there were more black (white) (use same race) kids in the school?
If Yes—Why would you like to have more black (white kids here?
30. Since blacks and whites tend to live in different neighborhoods, sometimes black children get used to being in schools without many white kids. Do you think black (white) (use opposite race first, then repeat with same race) children have any trouble knowing how to act toward white kids when they are in a school like _____?
31. Since there are more whites than blacks in America sometimes white people get used to being the majority in most situations. Do you think white children have any difficulty getting used to a school like _____ where there are more blacks than whites?
If Yes—Try to probe specifically for problems related to being a *minority* rather than just for problems connected with interacting with blacks. If the child seems capable of it and mentions "minority" concern, see if you can probe whether they think blacks would experience these same "minority" difficulties or not if _____ were heavily white.

Now I'd like to ask you a few more questions about the way students and teachers act here at _____.

32. How often do students compare the grades they get on tests or report cards?
33. How often do students help each other when they have problems with their classwork?
34. How often do teachers ask students to work with others on a class project like a science experiment or a group report?
35. How much do you think students work just to try to get better grades than other students?
36. You know I've heard some kids talk about being intimidated by other kids, you know, being threatened, scared or pushed around. Please look at this card. As you can see the numbers go from 0-15. Look at the labels then choose the number that comes closest to describing how much intimidation there is here. You can choose numbers between the labels like +3 or +12 if you want to.
37. Are there certain kids or groups of kids who are most likely to do this?

38. Are there any particular groups of kids who are most likely to do this?
39. Do you think boys or girls are more likely to intimidate other students or is it about equal?
40. Do you think black (white) or white (black) kids are more likely to intimidate others or is it about equal? Are there some kids who are more likely to be picked on than others?
    If Yes—Why do you think that is?
42. Who are the boys most likely to intimidate? Same for girls.
43. Who do boys (girls) (same sex *first*) intimidate mainly, other boys or girls? Repeat for opposite sex.
44. Who do black (white) (same race first) kids intimidate mainly, other blacks (whites) or other whites (blacks)? Repeat with opposite race.

    Please look at this card. You can see it is like the last one except it's about fighting. The numbers go from 0-15. Look at the labels then choose the number that comes closest to describing how much fighting goes on here. Don't forget that you can choose numbers in between the labels if you want.

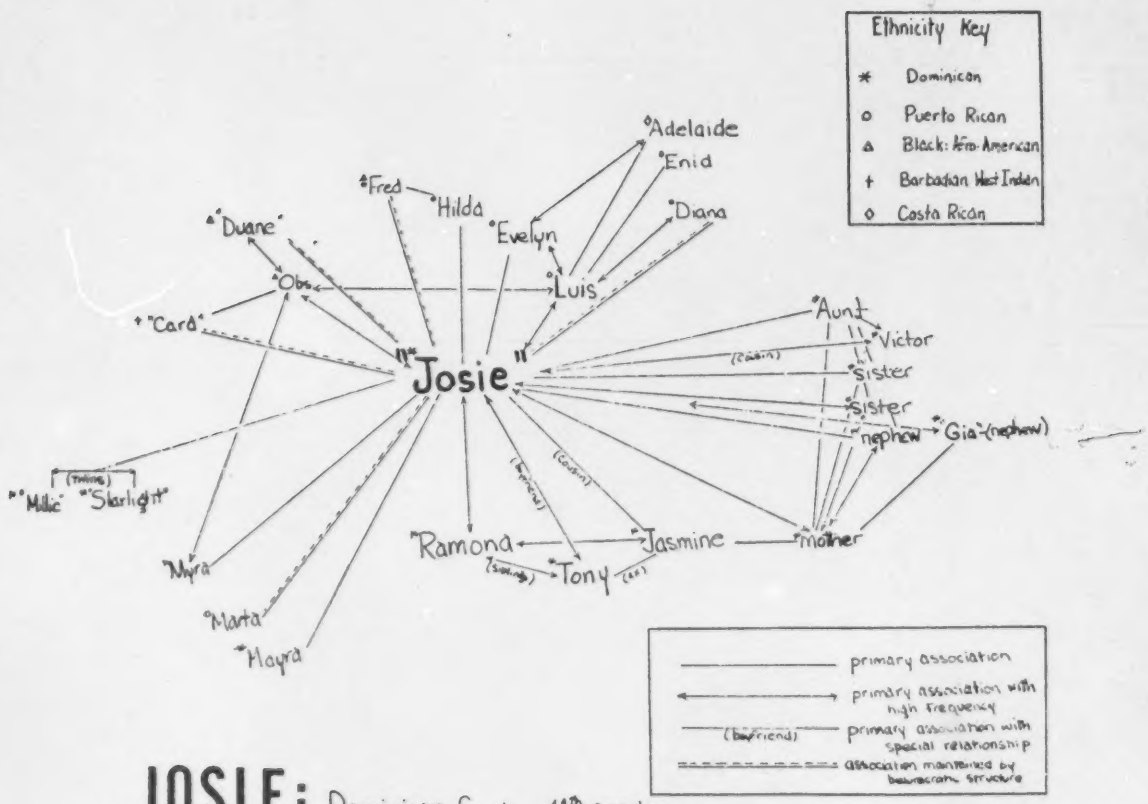
45. Are there certain kinds of kids that seem to fight a lot? What are these students like?
46. Who fights more often, boys or girls?
47. Who do the boys fight with mainly, other boys or girls?
48. Who do the girls fight with mainly, other girls or boys?
49. Who fights more often, white kids or black kids (own race first)?
50. Who do the black kids fight with, mainly other blacks or with whites?
51. Who do the white kids fight with, mainly other whites or with blacks?
52. How often do you think kids here make fun of the way others look or talk?
    Probe: What sort of things do kids make fun of? Do kids ever make fun of others for being black or white?
53. How often do kids here ignore or reject someone who is trying to be friends with them?

Before I asked you to compare _____ with your old school in several ways. Now I'd like you to answer some of the same questions about _____. This time, though, you won't compare it with your old school.

54. How good a school do you think _____ is?
55. How friendly would you say students are at _____?
56. How well-behaved do you think students are at _____?
57. How well do students get along at _____?
58. How hard is it to get good grades at _____?
59. How often do you think kids feel afraid of other kids here?
60. How often do you feel lonely here at _____?
61. Some people say that black and white kids in schools like _____ get to know each other real quickly and easily. Others say that this isn't always so. What do you think?
62. Are things at all different now between black and white kids compared to September? How?
63. Were there any blacks (whites) (opposite race) in your school last year?
    If Yes—Do you think black and white kids in general get along worse this year than last, better, or about the same? (Note: probe response.)
64. What was your worst experience here at _____, the worst thing that has happened to you since you came here?
65. What was your best experience here at _____, the best that has happened to you since you came here?

Appendix B

Charting the network of a high school student—an example.



JOSIE: Dominican female 11th grade

Appendix C

Questionnaire schedule developed by Dr. Dorothy C. Clement, University of North Carolina, and associates for administration to teachers in desegregated urban schools.

TEACHER INTERVIEWS ON DESEGREGATION

Code _____
Interviewer _____
Date _____

In the following questions, we are interested in your *impressions* of the changes that have taken place in the _____ Schools over the last 5-10 years. We are interested in problems that have arisen and the changes that have come about either as a result of desegregation or *along with* desegregation. To begin, let me ask a general question.

1. What do you think have been the effects of school desegregation in _____? For example, suppose a person in the school system left 10 years ago and just returned. What kinds of changes would they find in the schools?
   (*What do you think are some other serious problems or important benefits that have come about as a result of school desegregation in _____?)
2. How would you describe the changes that have occurred as a result of desegregation or along with desegregation over the last 10 years or so in (*the following*)?

   a. class content
   b. the amount of homework assigned
   c. grading standards and standards for promotion to the next grade
   d. the way student performance and progress is reported (e.g. report card)
   e. disciplinary standards
   f. disciplinary procedures
   g. ways of handling absences
   h. the amount of work teachers have to do
   i. the grouping of students for classes
   j. school programs (special programs)
   k. guidance services
   l. teachers' contacts with parents (e.g., home visits)

      (*Would there be any special problems a T might feel in contacting (b) (w) parents the T didn't know well?)

   m. PTA
   n. teachers relationship to administrators and supervisors
   o. teachers relationships to other teachers
   p. how students get along with one another
   q. extra-curricular activities for students
   r. what other changes can you think of?

In the next few questions, we are interested in whether you feel that teachers in desegregated schools have extraordinary responsibilities. First...

3. What kinds of problems do teachers in desegregated schools have to be able to handle that teachers in all white or all black schools don't have to handle?
4. To what extent do you feel teachers are *expected to* teach students what it means to be black or what it means to be white?
5. (If not clear from answer) How do you feel about these expectations? Do you agree with them, disagree with them,...?
6. What particular kinds of problems do you think white students have in getting along with black students?
7. What particular kinds of problems do you think black students have in getting along with white students?
8. To what extent do you feel that teachers are *expected to help* students in desegregated schools work out these problems?
9. To what extent do you feel that teachers *should help* students in desegregated schools work out these problems?
10. (If they feel teachers should help) What kinds of methods have you tried to help students in desegregated schools work out these problems?

A final question is on a different subject.

11. Under what circumstances, in your opinion, should a teacher contact a parent?

By the way, we are planning to interview about 30 parents this summer. Is there anything in particular you feel we should ask or is there anything in particular you would like to have included in the questions?

Appendix D

Questionnaire schedule developed by Dr. Dorothy C. Clement, University of North Carolina, and associates for administration to parents of children attending desegregated schools.

PARENT INTERVIEW
NIE STUDY

First, I would like to ask you some general questions about _____ School.

1. a. How did you feel about _____ when _____ first started going there? (Were you happy? sad?)
   b. What caused you to feel that way?
   c. Have you continued to feel that way, or did your feelings change?
   d. (If relevant) What happened to change your mind?
2. a. How do you feel about the progress that _____ made at _____?
   (Rephrase: How do you feel about the education _____ got at _____?)
   b. What pleased you about it?
   c. What displeased you about it?
   d. (if displeased) What did you do about that?
   e. What do you think would have helped _____ make even more progress than he (she) did?
3. a. How well do you feel you knew what was going on over at _____?
   b. Did you have a chance to go over and talk with any of the teachers or the principal?
   c. What did you do (or, what would you have done) when things happened at school that you didn't like?
   (If too vague) Suppose that a teacher did something to _____ that you didn't like; what would you do?

Now, let me ask some questions about other schools.

4. How do you feel about the schools in _____ in general? Suppose that somebody you know was moving here from out of town and asked you about the schools in _____. How would you describe the schools to this person?
5. a. What are your thoughts about the present school board?
   b. Do you ever go to any of the school board meetings?
   c. Are you involved in any organizations that have anything to do with the schools?
   d. (If yes) What are those organizations?

Next, I want to ask your opinion on a couple of specific issues that the school board has been discussing lately. One is the issue of social promotion and the other is attendance.

6. What do you think should be done about students who miss a lot of school?

7. What about this question of social promotion or passing a student on to the next grade when they haven't done very well? Under what circumstances do you feel a teacher should hold a student back?

Now, I have a few questions on school desegregation.

8. What was it like when the schools were first desegregated here in _____?
(Probe: From your experience, or from what you heard, yow did the parents, the community, and the students react to the desegregation of the schools?)
9. Thinking about _____ schools as they are today, what would you say have been the *main failures* and the *main successes* of school desegregation?

Finally, I have a few brief questions about how long you've lived in _____, how far you've gone in school, and how far you hope _____ goes in school.

10. How many years have you lifed in the city of _____?
11. How many years have you lived in this neighborhood?
12. In what state were you raised?
(If the person lived in a number of states, choose the one in which they spent the majority of time during their first 16 years.)
13. (If raised in North Carolina) In what county were you raised?
(If the person lived in a number of NC counties, choose the one in which they spent the majority of time during their first 16 years.)
14. Was the town you were raised in: smaller than _____; about the same size as _____; larger than _____?
15. How far have you gone in school so far?
Less than high school 1
High school graduate 2
Post high school training 3
College graduate 4
Post-graduate training 5
Post-graduate degree 6
16. a. (If raised in _____) Did you go to elementary school in _____?
Yes 1
No 2
b. Did you go to junior high or high school in _____?
Yes 1
No 2
c. Did you attend college in _____?
Yes 1
No 2
17. a. How far would you like to see _____ go in school?
(Write out answer *verbatim*, summarize in categories. If they say it depends, ask for a minimum.)
Less than high school 1
High school graduate 2
Post high school training 3
College graduate 4
Post-graduate training 5
Post-graduate degree 6

b. Why do you think it's important for _____to (response from 17a)?

18. What's your present occupation?
19. What's the present occupation of other people who live in the same house with _____?
20. How are you related to _____?
(step)mother 1
(step)father 2
aunt or uncle 3

grandparent 4
older (step)sister 5
older (step)brother 6
other relative 7
other non-relative 8

An interview schedule was used to direct inquiry, but I digressed freely when an interesting issue came directed at aiding subsequent investigators who wish to contribute new ideas and findings.

OTHER COMMENTS they might have:

THANK THEM FOR THEIR TIME.

Appendix E

An example of coded field notes, deriving from interviews with ethnographers who had done fieldwork in desegregated schools. The example is taken directly from the files of Dr. Joan Cassell and so contains strikeovers and other typographical errors. For discussion of this kind of research procedure see chapter 14 of the text.

561

students open?

attitude change

students helping

confidentiality

notes

read notes students

to do with social race. She didn't learn much about their backgrounds outside of school except by inference and comments. I asked if she felt they were open with her or concealing alot. She said after she had been there a while they were open. At first they were worried that she was writing down bad things that they had done and that the team were going to tell the teacher, but after a while, when no trouble occurred for them, the ~~student~~ students opened up. They would do bad things and good things in front of the researchers. They had indications that the kids had ceased to attend to theird presence. For example, when they had interviews, when they asked kids what happened at a particular time in the classroom, one question would be "Was one of the researchers there?" and the kids would say "I don't know, I stopped paying attention to them a long time ago.' They tried to set up interviews outside of the classrooms. They wouldn't disrupt the classroom. The students were anxious to participate in that. She said 'not, I'm sure for love for us, but because they wanted to get out of class.' And she felt they were really open, especially the second year when the students really knew them. I a asked if any students made trouble for them or tried to help them. She said a number of students really wanted to help them. The focal students esppcially the second year were aware that they were focusing on them particularly, and other students would come up to them and ask them to write down their actions, and tell them how to spell their last names. And the students in their report chose their own ~~xxx~~ pseudonyms, and that was a very interesting process. She found the ones with very common names chose very unusual names, and the ones with very unusual names chose very common names. I asked how she handled taking notes in the classroom, the halls and other settings, and she said the classroom was very condusive to taking notes because verybody else was writing too. Sometimes it was different in very active settings like the playground or special events where you had to circulate and have contact with people. There was a lot of information and interviews before and after school with the teachers, they~~x~~ got, and they couldn't take notes at that time. They would jot down key words if they could, and then do notes later. But most of the time she spent observing classrooms and she wrote constantly. She also tried to record bulletin board displays, hall displays, and so on. I asked if the students tried to read her notes and she said "oh yes, they tried to read them.' But they generally

Appendix F

Questionnaire schedule utilized by Dr. Joan Cassell in interviewing researchers who have been performing ethnographic studies of desegregated schools.

METHODS AND QUESTIONNAIRE SCHEDULE

The data for this study were obtained primarily from interviews carried out with fifteen fieldworkers in six cities. Each interivew lasted from two to four-and-a-half hours and was taped, but not transcribed; instead, the tapes were used to verify details and obtain quotations when relevant. In the materials quoted in this text, words were occasionally omitted, or substituted: for example, I put "this" for "that"; or, left out phrases such as "I mean," or "you know," especially when several occurred in succession; I believe these minor changes clarified—without changing the sense of—what people said. An interview schedule was used to direct inquiry, but I digressed freely when an interesting issue came up. As a result, the interviews were comparatively flexible and open-ended, and the content of studies as well as research methods were discussed.

Eight of the nine principal investigators were interviewed. (The ninth was at first too busy to see me, and eventually decided he did not want to take part in this project.) Without the generosity and hospitality of the researchers, this manual could not have been prepared. All were intelligent, knowledgeable, and committed to the goals of desegregation; I believe much of their generosity was directed at aiding subsequent investigators who wish to contribute new ideas and findings.

The study schools were not visited, and no effort was made to meet school personnel: I was interested in details about the schools only insofar as they affected researchers' methods and problem-solving strategies.

I also interviewed a senior researcher, with experience in studying schools and directing projects, and an investigator who teaches fieldwork methods, is a first-class fieldworker, and has experience studying lower-class black workers.

During my visits to the study cities, I dined, drank, and partied with many of the researchers. This was not only pleasurable, it was also a species of fieldwork, helping me to better understand the investigators, their projects, and the problems they encountered during research. Again, I would like to thank them all for their kindness and hospitality.

I would also like to thank Murray and Rosalie Wax for advice, aid and encouragement.

QUESTIONNAIRE SCHEDULE FOR RESEARCHERS

I. *Staff*

Name, age, sex, ethnic and racial background of fieldworkers. Academic specialty and rank.

II. *Site*

1. Why was this particular school chosen for study. Who was responsible for the choice?
2. What were the good and bad parts of focussing on this particular school?
3. In what ways is this school typical or representative of schools in the area faced with issues of desegregation?

III. *Relationship Between Project Staff and People Studied*

A. *Students*

1. How were you involved in studying students?
2. How did you select students for study? How did you get consent, if you did?
3. What did you feel you could learn and not learn about the lives of students?
4. Do you feel they were open with you, or concealing a lot?
5. Did any students make trouble for you or try to help you?
6. How did you handle taking notes in classrooms and other areas of the school? Did students ever read your notes and comment on them?
7. How did your age, race, sex affect your relationship with students?
8. Did students' attitudes change toward you over time? Teachers'? Administrators'? Others'?
9. Did you observe any illicit or forbidden behavior among students?
10. Were you ever tempted to intervene?

B. *Teachers*

1. How were you involved in studying teachers?
2. How did you select teachers for study? How did you gain consent?
3. Do you feel they were open with you or concealing a lot? Did they ever stage performances for your benefit?
4. Did any teachers refuse to be studied or interviewed?
5. Were there any things the teachers were anxious to have you learn?
6. How did your age, race, sex affect your relationship with teachers of various backgrounds?
7. Did you observe any (illicit or) forbidden behavior among teachers?
8. How did teachers react to your note-taking?

C. *Administration*

1. How were you involved in studying the administration?
2. Were there any problems in getting the consent of administrators to being studied or observed?
3. Did anyone refuse to be studied?
4. Do you feel they were hiding things from you?
5. What were they anxious to have you learn?
6. Were performances staged for your benefit?

D. *Parents*

1. What about your relationship with the parents of students?
2. How did you select parents for study? How did you gain consent?
3. Tell me about the difficulties of studying parents?

E. *Other School Personnel* (nurses, secretaries, social workers, elevator operators, etc.)

1. Who were studied?
2. How did you get consent? Did anyone refuse?
3. Tell me about the difficulties of research.

F. *Key Informants*

1. Were there any students, teachers, members of the administration or others with whom you developed very close ties, who were particularly helpful?
2. Were there any problems related to these relationships?

IV. *Project Dynamics*

A. *Working as a Team*

1. Was there a boss? What did you do when you disagreed about a course of action?
2. How did you decide who did what?
3. Could one researcher get along with teachers and students, blacks and whites? Or did you divide the groups and types of rapport?
4. Do you think you had the optimal number and right mix of researchers? If not, what would you ideally have wished for?

B. *Data Collection, Analysis and Writing*

1. How did you collect data?
   a. Methods?
   b. Means (notes, tape recorder, photos, etc.)
2. What do you think the advantages and disadvantages of this type or types of data collection are?
3. How did you classify and analyze qualitative data?
4. How did you divide up analysis and writing?
5. What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of this type of team research as compared with individual research?

C. *Sponsor*

1. What is the difference between what you originally proposed to study and what you ended up studying?
2. Were you addressing a particular audience when you wrote up your findings?
3. Were there any disagreements with the sponsor about what you should be doing?
4. Did the change in personnel at NIE affect your work?
5. Were there changes in policy or regulations in NIE which affected your work?
6. What advice would you give a research team trying to study a school, if they were funded by a government agency?
7. What do you wish someone had told you about running a project, or what would you like to tell someone who has never run a project before?
   a. About the budget
   b. About personnel
   c. Administering a project
   d. Hiring fieldworkers
   e. Writing a final report
8. What advice would you give a government officer directing an ethnographic study of schools?

V. *Problems in Doing Research*

1. Did you ever lie or indirectly deceive people while doing fieldwork? Did you ever wish you had lied?
2. Did you ever do or say anything you were sorry about in retrospect. Or *not* do or say anything?
3. Did you make any promises you couldn't keep?
4. Were there some ticklish situations you wonder now if you could have handled better?
5. Were you ever caught in a political squeeze between two contending groups?
6. Now that you've finished your research, do you think another researcher could come in and study your school? Or has the field site been "damaged?"
7. Do you think another researcher could come in if your report were published?
8. Did you have any trouble keeping things you learned about students, teachers, administrators, private and confidential?
9. How did you report potentially damaging data? Did you have any problems in writing up your findings worrying about damaging individuals or groups, or angering individuals or groups?
10. Did you have to conceal some data? What, why, how?

VI. *Looking Back and Looking Forward*

1. Do you think studying a *desegregated* school differs from studying an ordinary school?
2. What preconceptions do you think you started research with?
3. What do you now think about the phrase "equality of educational opportunity"? What does it now mean to you?
4. Now that you've finished this fieldwork, if you were designing a major survey for desegregated-integrated-racially mixed schools, what questions would you ask?
5. If you were planning a new fieldwork project today in your school or one like it, what would you study?

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Introduction to Bibliography

By Murray L. Wax

While the ethnographic literature is large and contains many technical items, it also includes some which are graphically written, dramatically narrated, and yet profoundly instructive. Since these provide pleasurable and exciting introductions to the methodology of the discipline, a few are listed below:

Colin Turnbull's *The Forest People* gives a vivid, frank and unpretentious picture of the Pygmies of the Ituri Forest and of how Turnbull lived among them and shared in their lives. Included is a detailed portrait of the adolescent youth and their socialization.

William Foote Whyte's *Street Corner Society* portrays the life of young men in an ethnic (Boston Italian) ghetto during conditions of economic adversity. The portrait is particularly strong in explaining the alienation of these youth from such civic institutions as settlement houses (and schools), while showing the working interrelationships with police, rackets, and politics. The Appendix to the 1955 edition contains a frank memoir about the problems of conducting fieldwork (it is also reprinted by Roberts and Akinsanya). While the book has become a classic, its contents remain relevant to understanding the youth of the metropolis.

Laurence Wylie's *Village in the Vauclose* includes an excellent portrait of rural French children and the village school (in which he taught); the contrast with the U.S. is noteworthy. When first published, the book sold so well as to prove embarrassing to the non-profit status of Harvard University Press.

Joan Cassell's *A Group Called Women* is an intimate account of the urban women's movement by a true participant observer. As evident from the present manual, her style is clear, simple, lively, unconventional, and free from jargon.

Some anthropologists have written personal memoirs about their experiences in the field, and their books likewise provide instruction that is dramatic and enjoyable:

Rosalie H. Wax's *Doing Fieldwork: Warnings and Advice* is based on her solo fieldwork in the Relocation Centers where the Japanese-Americans were confined during World War II and on her subsequent participation as a co-leader of research teams studying American Indian children in rural or reservation schools. Given the author's simple and blunt honesty about fieldwork in the midst of adversity, the book is—as one reviewer characterized it—one of the funniest in all of anthropology; given the tragic settings, it is also one of the most poignant. From the various narratives, the author derives advice and encouragement for those who are considering fieldwork.

Hortense Powdermaker's *Stranger and Friend* recounts the professional autobiography of a distinguished anthropologist, recently deceased. After reviewing her education and early career, she narrates her fieldwork experiences which ranged in site from a technologically primitive community on the island of Lesu, to a southern plantation town in rural Mississippi, to the Hollywood film community, and a Rhodesian mining town.

A number of readers contain shorter anthropological memoirs, of which again some are both fascinating and educational. Especially noteworthy are those within the volumes edited by Kimball and Watson (1972); Golde (1970); Spindler (1970); and Frielich (1970).

For those who prefer to approach fieldwork via a textbook, there are several of excellence. These include the ones written by Bruyn (1956); Glaser and Strauss (1967); Schatzman and Strauss (1973); and Denzin (1970).

Supplementing these textbooks are readers containing formal discussions of methods and procedures, usually anthologized from the journal literature. The bibliography herewith lists some of these more important essays, which often are reproduced in several of the readers, and which are cited repeatedly by those in the field. Among these readers are those edited by Denzin (1978); Adams and Preiss (1960); Filstead (1970); McCall and Simmons (1969); Vidich, Bensman, and Stein (1964).

With regard to the study of schools and education by ethnographic methods, there are a handful of readers, containing important literature. The largest and most comprehensive selection is contained in the two volumes edited by Roberts and Akinsanya; an earlier volume of excellent essays is that edited by Wax, Diamond and Gearing. Both of the foregoing contain extensive bibliographies: Roberts and Akinsanya organize their bibliography on a chronological basis; the bibliography assembled by Lindquist for the volume edited by Wax, Diamond and Gearing was organized territorially. Other readers worthy of notice are those edited by Lindquist and by Ianni and Storey.

The reader who has some background in the literature described above is prepared to cope with the monographic literature on schools studied by ethnographic methods. As yet, there are so few such monographs that most are contained in the appended bibliography. These can be read substantively, as intimate portraits of particular schools in their social contexts. They can also be read concer ually and theoretically. For example, the mono aph by Wax, Wax, and Dumont (1964) on the schools serving the Oglala Sioux children of the Pine Ridge Reservation contains findings which can fruitfully be juxtaposed to the celebrated study by Coleman (1966). Although the Wax, Wax and Dumont monograph seems particular to Pine Ridge, its findings can be much more broadly applied to schools generally, including urban schools. Finally, the studies can be used as research paradigms: how fieldwork is done and its findings reported. For the convenience of the reader, a small number of the monographic studies are listed below, arranged according to the nationality or ethnicity or location of the host people and their school:

Canadian Indian: King (1967); Wolcott (1967)
France (rural): Wylie (1964)
Germany (rural): Warren (1967); Spindler (1973)
Japan (rural): Singleton (1967)
Mexico (rural Indian): Modiano (1973)
United Kingdom: Hargeaves (1967)
United States (recent urban): Eddy (1969); Jackson (1968); Leacock (1969); Moore (1967); Ogbu (1974); Rist (1973); Roberts (1970); Rosenfeld (1971).

As is evident from the listing, because most fieldwork on schools has—until recently—been conducted by anthropologists, there has been a distinct bias in the subject matter toward the rural and tribal. In the last decade, that bias has been disappearing.

There is a small, but growing literature, by fieldworkers who themselves derive from minority backgrounds. In his personal memoir Drake (1978) reviews "Anthropology and the Black Experience," touching on studies of schools and of Black youth. Ogbu (an Ibo) conducted fieldwork (1974) in Stockton, California, and its schools, and then attempted to situate his findings in a cross-cultural context (1978). Robert V. Dumont, Jr., an Assiniboine from Fort Peck, Montana, participated in the research teams led by Murray and Rosalie Wax, and contributed insightful essays to the literature (1976, 1972). Hispanics, such as Henry Trueba, have also begun to participate creatively. Where among the hosts there are sharp boundaries of ethnicity or social race, the use of research teams with corresponding membership, has been a useful strategic device, since the example established by the families of Allison Davis and the Gardners (1941).

In addition to the materials bearing on fieldwork (ethnography, participant observation), here are several texts bearing on related methods. John Collier, Jr., discusses the ethnographic use of photography; Langness the life history; and the volume edited by Cazden, John, and Hymes the use of linguistic methods.

From the perspective of the methodology and philosophy of science, there has been considerable discussion of fieldwork and related varieties of qualitative methods. Among other explications of the philosophical bases of these methods, there is the notable collection of essays by Blumer (1969), various essays by M. Wax (1965, 1967, 1969, 1972), and works by Becker, Cicourel, Garfinkel, Seeley, Strauss. The collection of essays assembled by Truzzi (1974) is pertinent. Most sociological fieldworkers filiate themselves either to the Symbolic Interactionist tradition traced to George Herbert Mead or the Phenomenological tradition traced to Alfred Schutz and Edmund Husserl.

Compared to sociologists, anthropologists have tended to be more pragmatic about research

methods and less inclined toward philosophical defenses of ethnographic procedures. A classical statement may be found in the writings of Radin (1933); more recent and sophisticated explications in the writings of Devereaux (1967), Evans-Pritchard (1962) and Geertz (1973). Some anthropologists, such as Narroll and Cohen (1970) are critical of traditional ethnography and have pushed for more positivistic and quantitative approaches. However, most anthropologists have been eclectic in their methodologies, and the most significant move toward formalization is represented by the rise of ethnoscience and of methodological approaches influenced by the discipline of linguistic analysis (Tyler, ed. 1969).

In the course of fieldwork, difficult ethical problems are almost invariably generated. Accounts of some varieties of these issues may be found in the readers edited by Rynkiewich and Spradley (1977) and by Sjoberg (1967); note also New, Hessler, *et al.* (1973). A more recent collection, especially focusing on the ethical dilemmas created by federal regulations is that of Wax and Cassell (1979) [which incorporates the paper by Cassell (1978b)]; see also M. Wax (1977). As the world becomes literate, an especially difficult ethical problem is that connected with preserving the privacies of the host people or institution and yet communicating the findings to fellow scientists and makers of educational policy; here, the role of the federal government as sponsor and monitor can become expecially perplexing (cf. Colfer 1976).

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